THE

THEOLOGICAL WORKS

OF

ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

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CONTENTS

TO

VOL. IV.

SERMONS ON THE APOSTLES' CREED.

THE

CHRISTIAN FAITH

EXPLAINED AND VINDICATED

IN SEVERAL

SERMONS

UPON

THE CHIEF ARTICLES OF IT

CONTAINED IN

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

TO THE KING.

SIR,

I MOST humbly preſent to Your Majeſty a work, the author whereof, my ſon, was much the more dear to me for his conſtant and exemplary loyalty. Not only the general obligation of a ſubject always engaged him to Your Majeſty's ſervice, but the particular favours wherewith you were pleaſed to honour and encourage his ſtudies, might probably have induced him to a Dedication of this kind, if his modeſty would have let him think any thing of his worthy Your Majeſty's patronage. This, which I here offer, is, by thoſe who are better able to judge of it than myſelf, valued as the moſt conſiderable of his productions: but it chiefly preſumes to entitle itſelf to your royal protection, becauſe it is an Explication and Vindication of that Chriſtian Faith, whereof Your Majeſty is the great Defender.

And, Sir, I beg leave to take this opportunity to make as public an acknowledgment as I can, of that great goodneſs Your Majeſty has ſhewn in the acceptance and recompenſe of the fidelity I have through a courſe of many years borne to the cauſe of Your Majeſty and your Royal Father.

Long may Your Majeſty live and reign under the happy conduct and bleſſing of that Wiſdom, in whoſe right hand is length of days, and in her left hand riches and honour. I am,

May it pleaſe your Majeſty,

Your Majeſty's moſt humble,

faithful, and obedient

Subject and Servant,

THOMAS BARROW.

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON I.

OF THE EVIL AND UNREASONABLENESS OF INFIDELITY.

HEB. iii. 12.

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.

SERM. I.

IF the causes of all the sin and all the mischief in the world were carefully sought, we should find the chief of all to be infidelity; either total or gradual. Wherefore to dehort and dissuade from it is a very profitable design; and this, with God's assistance, I shall endeavour from these words; in which two particulars naturally do offer themselves to our observation; an assertion implied, that infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart; and a duty recommended, that we be careful to void or correct that distemper: of these to declare the one, and to press the other, shall be the scope of my discourse.

That infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart, appeareth by divers express testimonies of Scripture, and by many good reasons grounded thereon.

It is by our Saviour in terms called *sin*: *when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin,—of sin, because they believe not in me*: and, *If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin*: and, *If ye were blind, ye should not have had*

John xvi. 8, 9.
John xv. 22. ix. 41. (viii. 24.)
ix. 41.

SERM. I.

ſin; but now ye ſay, We ſee, therefore your ſin abideth. What ſin? that of infidelity, for which they were culpable, having ſuch powerful means and arguments to believe imparted to them, without due effect.

It hath a condemnation grounded thereon; *He,* ſaith our Saviour, *that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*[a]: but condemnation ever doth ſuppoſe faultineſs.

2 Theſſ. ii. 11, 12. It hath ſore puniſhment denounced thereto; *God,* ſaith St. Paul, *ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs;* and, 2 Theſſ. i. 8. Our Lord, ſaith he, at his coming to judgment, will *take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt;* whence among thoſe, Rev. xii. 8. who *have their part in the lake burning with fire and brimſtone, the fearful, and unbelievers* (that is, they who fear to profeſs, or refuſe to believe the Chriſtian doctrine) are reckoned in the firſt place; which implieth infidelity to be a heinous ſin.

It is alſo ſuch, becauſe it is a *tranſgreſſion of* a principal *law,* or divine command; *This,* ſaith St. John, *is* ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτοῦ, *the command of him, That we ſhould believe; this,* 1 John iii. 23. John vi. 29. ſaith our Lord, is τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the* ſignal *work of God,* Mark. i. 15. (which God requireth of us,) that *ye believe on him, whom he hath ſent:* that was a duty, which our Lord and his Apoſtles chiefly did teach, enjoin, and preſs; wherefore correſpondently infidelity is a great ſin; according to 1 John iii. 4. St. John's notion, that *ſin* is ἀνομία, *the tranſgreſſion of a law.*

But the ſinfulneſs of infidelity will appear more fully by conſidering its nature and ingredients; its cauſes; its properties and adjuncts; its effects and conſequences.

I. In its nature it doth involve an affected blindneſs and ignorance of the nobleſt and moſt uſeful truths; a bad uſe

[a] John iii. 18. xii. 48. Οὐ γὰρ μόνον τὸ μὴ εἴκειν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀπιστοῦν αὐταῖς χαλεπωτάτην ἐπάγει τὴν κόλασιν. *Chryſ. ad Demat.* tom. vi. p. 140.

of reason, and most culpable imprudence; disregard of God's providence, or despite thereto; abuse of his grace; bad opinions of him, and bad affections toward him; for

God in exceeding goodness and kindness to mankind hath proposed a doctrine, in itself *faithful and worthy of all acceptation*; containing most excellent truths instructive of our mind and directive of our practice, toward attainment of salvation and eternal felicity; special overtures of mercy and grace most needful to us in our state of sinful guilt, of weakness, of wretchedness; high encouragements and rich promises of reward for obedience: such a doctrine, with all its benefits, infidelity doth reject, *defeating the counsel of God*, crossing his earnest *desires* of our welfare, *despising his goodness and patience*.

Tit. ii. 11. iii. 4. 1 Tim. i. 15. Luke vii. 30. Matt. xxiii. 37. 1 Tim. ii. 4. Luke x. 16. Rom. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9, 15.

To this doctrine God hath yielded manifold clear attestations, declaring it to proceed from himself; ancient presignifications and predictions; audible voices and visible apparitions from heaven, innumerable miraculous works, Providence concurring to the maintenance and propagation of it against most powerful oppositions and disadvantages: but all these testimonies infidelity slighteth, not fearing to give their author the lie, which wicked boldness St. John chargeth on it; *He*, saith the Apostle, *that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the testimony that God gave of his Son.*

1 Pet. i. 10. Acts iii. 18. Luke xxiv. 44. Heb. ii. 4. Acts iv. 33. xix. 20. ii. 47. vi. 7. xii. 24. 1 John v. 10.

Many plain arguments, sufficient to convince our minds, and win our belief, God hath furnished; the dictates of natural conscience, the testimony of experience, the records of history, the consent of the best and wisest men, do all conspire to prove the truth, to recommend the usefulness of this doctrine; but infidelity will not regard, will not weigh, will not yield to reason.

God by his providence doth offer means and motives inducing to belief, by the promulgation of his Gospel, and exhortation of his ministers: but all such methods infidelity doth void and frustrate; *thrusting away the word, turning away the ear from the truth, letting the seed fall beside us, casting away the law of the Lord of hosts*; in

2 Cor. v. 20. Acts xiii. 46. 2 Tim. iv. 4. Matt. xiii. Isa. v. 24.

SERM. I.

effect (as those in Job) *saying to God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*

Job xxi. 14. John vi. 44. (Rev. iii. 20.) Acts vii. 51. 1 Thess. v. 19. 2 Cor. iv. 4.

God by his grace *doth shine upon our hearts*, doth attract our wills to compliance with his will, doth excite our affections to relish his truth: but infidelity doth *resist his Spirit*, doth quench the heavenly light, doth smother all the suggestions and motions of divine grace within us.

What God asserteth, infidelity denieth, questioning his veracity; what God commandeth, infidelity doth not approve, contesting his wisdom; what God promiseth, infidelity will not confide in, distrusting his fidelity, or his power: such is its behaviour (so injurious, so rude, so foolish) toward God, and his truth; this briefly is its nature, manifestly involving great pravity, iniquity, and impiety.

II. The causes and sources from whence it springeth (touched in Scripture, and obvious to experience) are those which follow.

1. It commonly doth proceed from negligence, or drowsy inobservance and carelessness; when men being possessed with a *spirit of slumber*, or being amused with secular entertainments, do not mind the concerns of their soul, or regard the means by God's merciful care presented for their conversion; being in regard to religious matters of Gallio's humour, *caring for none of those things:* thus, when the king in the Gospel sent to invite persons to his wedding feast, it is said, Οἱ δὲ ἀμελήσαντες ἀπήλθον, they *being careless, or not regarding it, went their ways, one to to his field, another to his trade.* Of such the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, *How shall we escape,* τοιαύτης ἀμελήσαντες σωτηρίας, *who regard not so great salvation,* exhibited to us? Of such Wisdom complaineth; *I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. No man:* the greatest part indeed of men are upon this account infidels, for that being wholly taken up in pursuit of worldly affairs and divertisements, in amassing of wealth, in driving on projects of ambition, in enjoying sensual pleasures, in gratifying their fancy and humour

Rom. xi. 8. Acts xviii. 17. Matt. xxii. 5. Heb. ii. 3. Prov. i. 24. Isa. lxv. 12. lxvi. 4. Jer. vii. 31.

with vain curiofities, or ſports, they can hardly lend an ear to inſtruction; ſo they become unacquainted with the notions of Chriſtian doctrine; the which to them are as *the ſeed falling by the way ſide*, which thoſe *fowls of the air* do ſnatch and devour before it ſinketh down into the earth, or doth come under conſideration. Hence is unbelief commonly termed not *hearing God's voice*, not hearkening to God's word, the din of worldly buſineſs rendering men deaf to divine ſuggeſtions.

Matt. xiii. 4.

2. Another ſource of infidelity is ſloth, which indiſpoſeth men to undergo the fatigue of ſeriouſly attending to the doctrine propounded, of examining its grounds, of weighing the reaſons inducing to believe; whence at firſt hearing, if the notions hap not to hit their fancy, they do ſlight it before they fully underſtand it, or know its grounds; thence at leaſt they muſt needs fail of a firm and ſteady belief, the which can alone be founded on a clear apprehenſion of the matter, and perception of its agreeableneſs to reaſon: ſo when the Athenians did hear St. Paul declaring the grand points of faith, ſomewhat in his diſcourſe uncouth to their conceit falling from him, ſome of them did ſcorn, others did neglect his doctrine; *ſome mocked; others ſaid, We will hear thee again of this matter*; ſo Agrippa was *almoſt perſuaded to be a Chriſtian*, but had not the induſtry to proſecute his inquiry, till he arrived to a full ſatisfaction. A ſolid faith (with clear underſtanding and firm perſuaſion) doth indeed, no leſs than any ſcience, require ſedulous and perſevering ſtudy; ſo that as a man can never be learned, who will not be ſtudious; ſo a ſluggard cannot prove a good believer.

Acts xvii. 32.

xxvi. 28.

3. Infidelity doth ariſe from ſtupidity, or dulneſs of apprehenſion, (I mean not that which is natural; for any man in his ſenſes, how low ſoever otherwiſe in parts or improvements, is capable to underſtand the Chriſtian doctrine, and to perceive reaſon ſufficient to convince him of its truth; but) contracted by voluntary indiſpoſitions and defects; a ſtupidity riſing from miſts of prejudice, from ſteams of luſt and paſſion, from ruſt grown on the mind by want of exerciſing it in obſerving and comparing things;

SERM. I.

whence men cannot apprehend the cleareſt notions plainly repreſented to them, nor diſcern the force of arguments, however evident and cogent; but are like thoſe wizards in Job, who *meet with darkneſs in the daytime, and grope at noonday, as in the night.*

Job v. 14. Iſa. lix. 10. Deut. xxviii. 29.

This is that, which is ſo often charged on the Jews as cauſe of their infidelity; who [c] *did hear but not underſtand, and did ſee but not perceive; becauſe their heart was groſs, and their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes were cloſed*; this is that πώρωσις καρδίας, that *numbneſs of heart*, which is repreſented as the common obſtruction to the perception and admiſſion of our Lord's doctrine: this our Lord blamed in his own Diſciples, when he rebuked them thus; *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken!* Of this the Apoſtle doth complain, telling the Hebrews, that they were uncapable of improvement in knowledge, becauſe they were νωθροὶ ταῖς ἀκοαῖς, *dull of hearing* for want of ſkill and uſe, *not having their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil:* there is indeed to a ſound and robuſt faith required a good perſpicacy of apprehenſion, a penetrancy of judgment, a vigour and quickneſs of mind, grounded in the purity of our faculties, and confirmed by exerciſe of them in conſideration of ſpiritual things.

Luke xxiv. 45. Heb. v. 11, 14.

4. Another cauſe of infidelity is a bad judgment; corrupted with prejudicate notions, and partial inclinations to falſehood. Men are apt to entertain prejudices favourable to their natural appetites and humours; to their luſts, to their preſent intereſts; dictating to them, that wealth, dignity, fame, pleaſure, eaſe, are things moſt deſirable, and neceſſary ingredients of happineſs; ſo that it is a ſad thing in any caſe to want them: all men have ſtrong inclinations biaſſing them toward ſuch things; it is a hard thing to ſhake off ſuch prejudices, and to check ſuch inclinations; it is therefore not eaſy to entertain a doctrine repreſenting ſuch things indifferent, obliging us ſometimes

Matt. xvi. 23. John vi. 60, 66.

[c] Acts xxviii. 26.—Iſa. vi. 9. Matt. xiii. 14. John xii. 40. Rom. xi. 7, 8, 25. Eph. iv. 18. Iſa. xxix. 10. Ezek. xxi. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 14. Mark iii. 5. vi. 52. viii. 17.

to reject them, always to be moderate in the purſuit and enjoyment of them: wherefore infidelity will naturally ſpring up in a mind not cleanſed from thoſe corruptions of judgment.

5. Another ſource of infidelity is perverſeneſs of will, which hindereth men from entertaining notions diſagreeable to their fond or froward humour: ὦ γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη, *O faithleſs and perverſe generation!* thoſe epithets are well coupled, for he that is perverſe will be faithleſs; in proportion to the one the other bad quality will prevail. *The weapons of the apoſtolical warfare* (againſt the infidel world) *were*, as St. Paul telleth us, *mighty to the caſting down of ſtrong holds:* ſo it was; and the Apoſtles, by their diſcourſe and demeanour, effectually did force many a ſtrong fortreſs to ſurrender: but the will of ſome men is an impregnable bulwark againſt all batteries of diſcourſe; they are ſo invincibly ſtubborn, as to hold out againſt the cleareſt evidence and mightieſt force of reaſon: if they do not like what you ſay, if it croſs any humour of theirs, be it clear as day, be it firm as an adamant, they will not admit it; you ſhall not perſuade them, though you do perſuade them. Such was the temper of the Jews, whom St. Stephen therefore calleth *a ſtiff-necked people, uncircumciſed in heart and ears;* who although they did hear the moſt winning diſcourſe that ever was uttered, although they ſaw the moſt admirable works that ever were performed, yet would they not yield to the doctrine; the mean garb of the perſons teaching it, the ſpirituality of its deſign, the ſtrict goodneſs of its precepts, and the like conſiderations, not ſorting with their fancies and deſires; they hoping for a Meſſias arrayed with gay appearances of external grandeur and ſplendor, whoſe chief work it ſhould be to ſettle their nation in a ſtate of worldly proſperity and glory.

Matt. xvii. 17.

2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

οὐ πάντες δυνατοὶ τὰ σημεῖα, ἀλλὰ μόνοι τοὺς εὐγνώμονας. *Conſt. Apoſt.* viii. 1.

Acts vii. 21, 54. Jer. vi. 10. ix. 26.

6. This is that hardneſs of heart, which is ſo often repreſented as an obſtruction of belief; this hindered Pharaoh, notwithſtanding all thoſe mighty works performed before him, from *hearkening* to God's word, and regarding the miſchiefs threatened to come on him for his diſ-

Exod. vii. 4, 22. viii. 15, 19. ix. 12.

SERM. I.

obedience; *I will not*, said he, *let Israel go;* his will was his reason, which no persuasion, no judgment could subdue: this was the cause of that monstrous infidelity in the Israelites, which baffled all the methods which God used to persuade and convert them; *Notwithstanding*, it is said, *they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God:* whence that exhortation to them; *To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* And to obduration the disbelief of the Gospel upon the Apostles' preaching is in like manner ascribed; St. Paul, it is said in the Acts, *went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God: but divers were hardened, and believed not:* and, *Exhort one another daily*, saith the Apostle, *lest any of you be hardened* (in unbelief) *through the deceitfulness of sin.*

2 Kings xvii. 14.
Ps. xcv. 8. Heb. iii. 8.
Acts xix. 8, 9.
Heb. iii. 12. *Vid.* Mark xvi. 14.

7. Of kin to that perverseness of heart is that squeamish delicacy and niceness of humour, which will not let men entertain or favour any thing, anywise seeming hard or harsh to them, if they cannot presently comprehend all that is said, if they can frame any cavil, or little exception against it, if every scruple be not voided, if any thing be required distasteful to their sense; they are offended, and their faith is choked; you must, to satisfy them, *speak to them smooth things*, which nowise grate on their conceit or pleasure: so when our Lord discoursed somewhat mysteriously, representing himself in the figure of heavenly bread (typified by the manna of old) given for the world, to sustain men in life; *Many of his disciples, hearing this, said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it?* and *from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him:* this is that which is called being *scandalized at the word*, and *stumbling at it;* concerning which our Saviour saith, *Blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.*

Isa. xxx. 10.
John vi. 60, 66.
1 Pet. ii. 8.
John vi. 61.
Matt. xxiv. 10. xiii. 21.
Matt. xi. 6.

In regard to this weakness, the Apostles were fain in their instructions to use prudent dispensation, proposing only to some persons the most easy points of doctrine,

they not being able to digeſt ſuch as were more tough and difficult: *I have*, ſaith St. Paul, *fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able* to bear it—*for ye are yet carnal*; and, *Ye*, ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrews, *are ſuch as have need of milk, and not of ſtrong meat.*

1 Cor. iii. 2.
Heb. v. 12.

Such were even the Apoſtles themſelves in their minority; *not ſavouring the things of God*; being *offended at* our Lord's diſcourſes, when he ſpake to them of ſuffering; and with his condition, when he entered into it.

Matt. xvi. 23. xxvi. 31.

8. With theſe diſpoſitions is connected a want of love to truth; the which if a man hath not, he cannot well entertain ſuch notions as the Goſpel propoundeth, being nowiſe grateful to carnal ſenſe and appetite: this cauſe St. Paul doth aſſign of the Pagan doctors falling into ſo groſs errors and vices, *becauſe they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*; and of men's revolting from Chriſtian truth to Antichriſtian impoſture—*becauſe they received not the love of truth, that they might be ſaved: for which cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lie*: nothing indeed, but an impartial and ingenuous love of truth (overbalancing all corrupt prejudices and affections) can engage a man heartily to embrace this holy and pure doctrine, can preſerve a man in a firm adherence thereto.

Rom. i. 28.
2 Theſſ. ii. 11.

9. A grand cauſe of infidelity is pride, the which doth interpoſe various bars to the admiſſion of Chriſtian truth; for before a man can believe, πᾶν ὕψωμα, *every height* (every towering imagination and conceit) *that exalteth itſelf againſt the knowledge of God, muſt be caſt down.*

2 Cor. x. 5.

Pride fills a man with vanity and an affectation of ſeeming wiſe in ſpecial manner above others, thereby diſpoſing him to maintain paradoxes, and to nauſeate common truths received and believed by the generality of mankind.

A proud man is ever averſe from renouncing his prejudices, and correcting his errors; doing which implieth a confeſſion of weakneſs, ignorance, and folly, conſequently depreſſeth him in his own conceit, and ſeemeth to impair that credit, which he had with others from his wiſdom; neither of which events he is able to endure.

SERM. I.

He that is wise in his own conceit, will hug that conceit, and thence is uncapable to learn: *there is*, saith Solomon, *more hope of a fool than of him*; and he that affecteth the praise of men, will not easily part with it for the sake of truth: whence, *How*, saith our Lord, *can ye believe, who receive glory one of another?* how can ye, retaining such affections, be disposed to avow yourselves to have been ignorants and fools, whenas ye were reputed for learned and wise? how can ye endure to become novices, who did pass for doctors? how can ye allow yourselves so blind and weak, as to have been deceived in your former judgment of things?

Prov. xxvi. 12. John v. 44. xii. 43. 1 Cor. iii. 18.

He that is conceited of his own wisdom, strength of parts, and improvement in knowledge, cannot submit his mind to notions which he cannot easily comprehend and penetrate; he will scorn to have his understanding baffled or puzzled by sublime mysteries of faith; he will not easily yield any thing too high for his wit to reach, or too knotty for him to unloose: *How can these things be?* what reason can there be for this? I cannot see how this can be true; this point is not intelligible: so he treateth the dictates of faith; not considering the feebleness and shallowness of his own reason: Hence *not many wise men according to the flesh*, (or who were conceited of their own wisdom, relying upon their natural faculties and means of knowledge,) not many scribes, or *disputers of this world*, did embrace the Christian truth, it appearing absurd and foolish to them; it being needful, that a man should *be a fool, that he might*, in this regard, *become wise*.

John iii. 9. 1 Cor. i. 26. ii. 6. John vii. 26. 1 Cor. i. 20. i. 14. 1 Cor. iii. 18.

The prime notions of Christianity do also tend to the debasing human conceit, and to the exclusion of all glorying in ourselves; referring all to the praise and glory of God, ascribing all to his pure mercy, bounty, and grace: it representeth all men heinous sinners, void of all worth and merit, lapsed into a wretched state, altogether impotent, forlorn, and destitute of ability to help or relieve themselves; such notions proud hearts cannot digest; they cannot like to avow their infirmities, their defects, their wants, their vileness, and unworthiness; their distresses and

Rom. iii. 27. iv. 2, 16. ix. 11. xi. 6. 1 Cor. i. 29. iii. 21. Ephes. ii. 9. Tit. iii. 5.

miſeries; they cannot endure to be entirely and abſolutely beholden to favour and mercy for their happineſs; ſuch was the caſe of the Jews; who could not believe, becauſe, *going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, they would not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God. Dextra mihi Deus,* every proud man would ſay, with the profane Mezentius.

Rom. x. 3. ix. 31.

Chriſtianity doth alſo much diſparage and vilify thoſe things, for which men are apt much to prize and pride themſelves; it maketh ſmall account of wealth, of honour, of power, of wit, of ſecular wiſdom, of any human excellency or worldly advantage: it levelleth the rich and the poor, the prince and the peaſant, the philoſopher and idiot in ſpiritual regards; yea far preferreth the meaneſt and ſimpleſt perſon, endued with true piety, above the mightieſt and wealthieſt, who is devoid thereof: in the eye of it, *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour,* whatever he be in worldly regard or ſtate: this a proud man cannot ſupport; to be diveſted of his imaginary privileges, to be thrown down from his perch of eminency, to be ſet below thoſe whom he ſo much deſpiſeth, is inſupportable to his ſpirit.

The practice of Chriſtianity doth alſo expoſe men to the ſcorn and cenſure of profane men; who for their own ſolace, out of envy, revenge, diabolical ſpite, are apt to deride and reproach all conſcientious and reſolute practiſers of their duty, as ſilly, credulous, ſuperſtitious, humorous, moroſe, ſullen folks: ſo that he that will be good, muſt reſolve to bear that uſage from them; like David; *I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be baſe in my own ſight:* but with theſe ſufferings a proud heart cannot comport; it goeth too much againſt the grain thereof to be contemned.

2 Sam. vi. 22.

Chriſtianity doth alſo indiſpenſably require duties, point-blank oppoſite to pride; it placeth humility among its chief virtues, as a foundation of piety; it enjoineth us to think meanly of ourſelves, to diſclaim our own worth and deſert, to have no complacency or confidence in any thing belonging to us; not to aim at high things; to wave the

Rom. xii. 3, 16.

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regard and praiſe of men; it exacteth from us a ſenſe of our vileneſs, remorſe and contrition for our ſins, with humble confeſſion of them, ſelf-condemnation and abhorrence; it chargeth us to bear injuries and affronts patiently, without grievous reſentment, without ſeeking or ſo much as wiſhing any revenge; to undergo diſgraces, croſſes, diſaſters, willingly and gladly; it obligeth us *to prefer others before ourſelves*, ſitting down in the loweſt room, yielding to the meaneſt perſons: to all which ſorts of duty a proud mind hath an irreconcileable antipathy.

Job xlii. 3, 6.
Phil. ii. 3. Rom. xii. 10. 1 Pet. v. 5. Luke xiv. 10. Rom. xii. 16.

A proud man, that is big and ſwollen with haughty conceit and ſtomach, cannot ſtoop down ſo low, cannot ſhrink in himſelf ſo much, as to *enter into the ſtrait gate, or to walk in the narrow way, which leadeth to life:* he will be apt to contemn wiſdom and inſtruction.

Matt. vii. 14. Prov. i. 7, 30. v. 12. xiii. 13.

Shall I, will he ſay, ſuch a gallant as I, ſo accompliſhed in worth, ſo flouriſhing in dignity, ſo plump with wealth, ſo highly regarded and renowned among men, thus pitifully crouch and ſneak? ſhall I deign to avow ſuch beggarly notions, or bend to ſuch homely duties? ſhall I diſown my perfections, or forego my advantages? ſhall I profeſs myſelf to have been a deſpicable worm, a villanous caitiff, a ſorry wretch? ſhall I ſuffer myſelf to be flouted as a timorous religioniſt, a ſcrupulous preciſian, a conſcientious ſneakſby? ſhall I lie down at the foot of mercy, puling in ſorrow, whining in confeſſion, bewailing my guilt, and craving pardon? ſhall I allow any man better or happier than myſelf? ſhall I receive thoſe into conſortſhip, or equality of rank with me, who appear ſo much my inferiors? ſhall I be miſuſed and trampled on, without doing myſelf right, and making them ſmart who ſhall preſume to wrong or croſs me? ſhall I be content to be nobody in the world? So the proud man will ſay in his heart, conteſting the doctrines and duties of our religion, and ſo diſputing himſelf into infidelity.

Isa. v. 24. Ezek. xx. 13, 16, 24. Acts xiii. 41. (καταφρονηταί.) Luke x. 16. Rom. ii. 4.

10. Another ſpring of infidelity is puſillanimity, or want of good reſolution and courage: δειλοὶ καὶ ἄπιστοι, *cowards and infidels*, are well joined among thoſe who are devoted

Rev. xxi. 8.

to the fiery lake; for timorous men dare not believe ſuch doctrines, which engage them upon undertaking difficult, laborious, dangerous enterpriſes; upon undergoing hardſhips, pains, wants, diſgraces; upon encountering thoſe mighty and fierce enemies, with whom every faithful man continually doth wage war.

They have not the heart to look the world in the face, when it frowneth at them, menacing perſecution and diſgrace; but *when affliction ariſeth for the word, they are preſently ſcandalized.* It is ſaid in the Goſpel, that *no man ſpake freely of our Lord for fear of the Jews:* as it ſo did ſmother the profeſſion and muzzle the mouth, ſo it doth often ſtifle faith itſelf, and quell the heart, men fearing to harbour in their very thoughts points dangerous and diſcountenanced by worldly power.

Matt. xiii. 21. (John vii. 13. ix. 22. xix. 38.)

They have not alſo courage to adventure a combat with their own fleſh, and *thoſe luſts, which war againſt their ſouls;* to ſet upon correcting their temper, curbing their appetites, bridling their paſſions; keeping fleſh and blood in order; upon pulling out their right eyes, and cutting off their right hands, and crucifying their members; it daunteth them to attempt duties ſo harſh and painful.

Jam. iv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 11. Rom. vii. 23.

They have not the reſolution to withſtand and repel temptations, and in ſo doing to *wreſtle with principalities and powers;* to reſiſt and baffle the *ſtrong one.* To part with their eaſe, their wealth, their pleaſure, their credit, their accommodations of life, is a thing, any thought whereof doth quaſh all inclination in a faint and fearful heart of complying with the Chriſtian doctrine.

Eph. vi. 12. (Luke xiv. 31.)

Chriſtianity is a warfare; living after its rules is called *fighting the good fight of faith;* every true Chriſtian is a *good ſoldier of Jeſus Chriſt;* the ſtate of Chriſtians muſt be ſometimes like that of the Apoſtles, who were *troubled on every ſide; without were fightings, within were fears:* great courage therefore, and undaunted reſolution, are required toward the undertaking this religion, and the perſiſting in it cordially.

1 Tim. i. 18. Heb. xii. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 2 Cor. vii. 5.

11. Infidelity doth alſo riſe from ſturdineſs, fierceneſs,

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wildneſs, untamed animoſity of ſpirit; ſo that a man will not endure to have his will croſſed, to be under any law, to be curbed from any thing which he is prone to affect.

12. Blind zeal, grounded upon prejudice, diſpoſing men to ſtiff adherence unto that which they have once been addicted and accuſtomed to, is in the Scripture frequently repreſented as a cauſe of infidelity. So the Jews being *filled with zeal, contradicted the things ſpoken by St. Paul;* flying at his doctrine, without weighing it: ſo *by inſtinct of zeal* did St. Paul himſelf *perſecute the Church;* being *exceedingly zealous for the traditions delivered by his fathers.*

Acts xiii. 45. xvii. 5. v. 17. Rom. x. 2. Gal. iv. 17. Phil. iii. 6. κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων. Gal. i. 14. Acts xxvi. 11. περισσῶς ἐμμαινόμενος.

In fine, [d] infidelity doth iſſue from corruption of mind by any kind of brutiſh luſt, any irregular paſſion, any bad inclination or habit: any ſuch evil diſpoſition of ſoul doth obſtruct the admiſſion or entertainment of that doctrine, which doth prohibit and check it; doth condemn it, and brand it with infamy; doth denounce puniſhment and woe to it: whence *men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith;* and *men of corrupt minds, deſtitute of the truth,* are attributes well conjoined by St. Paul, as commonly jumping together in practice; and *to them,* ſaith he, *that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conſcience is defiled:* ſuch pollution is not only conſequent to, and connected with, but antecedent to infidelity, blinding the mind ſo as not to ſee the truth, and perverting the will ſo as not to cloſe with it.

2 Tim. iii. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 5. Tit. i. 15.

Faith and a good conſcience are twins, born together, inſeparable from each other, living and dying together; for the firſt, *faith* is (as St. Peter telleth us) nothing elſe but *the ſtipulation of a good conſcience,* fully perſuaded that Chriſtianity is true, and firmly reſolving to comply with it: and, *The end* (or drift and purport) *of the evangelical doctrine is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conſcience, and faith unfeigned:* whence thoſe apoſtolical

1 Pet. iii. 21. 1 Tim. i. 5.

[d] Οὐ μόνον παρὰ ἀπορίας ἐπιστρέφομεν ἀπολείψαι ταχέως περὶ τὸ τῶν παρ' ἡμῶν λεγομένων ὕψος, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντων καθαρώτατον τῶν παθῶν τὸν μέλλοντα θηρᾶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν. *Chryſ. in* 1 *Cor. Or.* 8.

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precepts, *to hold the myſtery of faith in a pure conſcience;* and, *to hold faith and a good conſcience, which ſome having put away, concerning the faith have made ſhipwreck:* a man void of good conſcience will not embark in Chriſtianity; and having laid good conſcience aſide, he ſoon will make ſhipwreck of faith, by apoſtaſy from it. Reſolute indulgence to any one luſt is apt to produce this effect.

1 Tim. iii. 9. i. 19.

If a man be covetous, he can *hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*, or ſubmit to that heavenly law, which forbiddeth us *to treaſure up treaſures upon earth;* which chargeth us to be liberal *in communication of our goods;* ſo as to *give unto every one that aſketh;* which in ſome caſes requireth to *ſell all our goods, and to give them to the poor;* which declareth, that *whoſoever doth not bid farewell to all that he hath, cannot be a diſciple of Chriſt;* which aſcribeth *happineſs to the poor*, and denounceth *woe to the rich, who have their conſolation here.* Preach ſuch doctrine to a covetous perſon, and, as the young gentleman who *had great poſſeſſions*, he will *go his way ſorrowful;* or will do like the Phariſees, who *were covetous*, and *having heard* our Saviour diſcourſe ſuch things, *derided him:* for *the love of money*, ſaith St. Paul, *is the root of all evil, which while ſome coveted after, they have erred from the faith;* ἀπεπλανήθησαν, *they have wandered away*, or apoſtatized from the faith.

Matt. xix. 23. vi. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 18. Heb. xiii. 16. Luke xvi. 9. Luke vi. 30. Matt. xix. 20. Luke xiv. 33. Luke vi. 20, 24. Matt. xix. 22. Luke xvi. 14. ἐξεμυκτήριζον αὐτόν. 1 Tim. vi. 10.

If a man be ambitious, he will not approve that doctrine, which prohibiteth us to affect, to ſeek, to admit glory, or to do any thing for its ſake; but purely to ſeek God's honour, and in all our actions to regard it as our principal aim: which greatly diſparageth all worldly glory as vain, tranſitory, miſchievous; which commandeth us *in honour to prefer others before ourſelves*, and to *ſit down in the loweſt room;* which promiſeth the beſt rewards to humility, and menaceth, that whoever *exalteth himſelf ſhall be abaſed*; the profeſſion and practice whereof are commonly attended with diſgrace: ſuch doctrines ambitious minds cannot admit; as it proved among the Jews; who therefore *could not believe, becauſe they received glory*

Phil. ii. 3. Gal. v. 26. John xii. 43. v. 44. Matt. vi. 1. 1 Pet. i. 24. 1 Cor. vii. 31. 1 John ii. 16. Rom. xii. 10. Luke xiv. 10. Matt. xxiii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14. John v. 44.

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from one another; who therefore would not profess the faith, *because they loved the glory of men rather than the glory of God.*

John xii. 43.

If a man be envious, he will not like that doctrine, which enjoineth him to desire the good of his neighbour, as his own; to have complacence in the prosperity and dignity of his brethren; *not to seek his own, but every man another's wealth,* or welfare; to *rejoice with them that rejoice, and mourn with those that mourn;* which chargeth us *to lay aside all envyings and emulations,* under pain of damnation: he therefore who is possessed with an envious spirit, or *evil eye,* will look ill upon this doctrine; as the Jews did, who being *full of envy* and emulation, did reject the Gospel; it being a grievous eyesore to them, that the poor Gentiles were thereby admitted to favour and mercy.

1 Cor. xii. 26. συγχαίρει. 1 Cor. x. 24. Phil. ii. 4. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 1. Gal. v. 20. Rom. xiii. 13. Jam. iii. 14, 16. Acts v. 17. xiii. 45. xvii. 5.

If a man be revengeful or spiteful, he will be scandalized at that law, which commandeth us *to love our enemies,* to *bless those that curse us,* to *do good to them that hate us,* to *pray for them that despitefully use us;* which forbiddeth us to *resist the evil, to render evil for evil, or railing for railing;* which chargeth us to bear patiently, and freely to remit all injuries, under penalty of forfeiting all hopes of mercy from God; which requireth us to *depose all wrath, animosity, and malice,* as inconsistent with our salvation: which doctrine how can a heart swelling with rancorous grudge or boiling with anger embrace? seeing it must be *in meekness that we must receive the engrafted word, that is able to save our souls.*

Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20, 17. 1 Pet. iii. 9. Matt. v. 39. 1 Cor. vi. 7. 1 Thess. v. 15. Col. iii. 13. Eph. iv. 32. Matt. vi. 15. xviii. 35. Col. iii. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 1. Gal. v. 20. Eph. iv. 31. Jam. i. 21.

If a man be intemperate, he will loathe that doctrine, the precepts of which are, that we be *temperate in all things,* that *we bring under our bodies,* that we *endure hardship as good soldiers of Christ;* to *avoid all excess;* to *possess our vessels in sanctification and honour;* to *mortify our members upon earth;* to *crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts;* to *abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul:* with which precepts how can a luxurious and filthy heart comport?

2 Tim. iv. 5. 1 Cor. ix. 25, 27. 2 Tim. ii. 3. i. 8. iv. 5. Eph. v. 18. 1 Thess. iv. 4. Col. iii. 5. Gal. v. 24. 2 Pet. ii. 11.

In fine, whatever corrupt affection a man be possessed

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with, it will work in him a diſtaſte and repugnance to that doctrine, which indiſpenſably, as a condition of ſalvation, doth preſcribe and require univerſal holineſs, purity, innocence, virtue, and goodneſs; which doth not allow any one ſin to be foſtered or indulged; which threateneth wrath and vengeance upon all impiety, iniquity, impurity, wherein we do obſtinately perſiſt; indifferently, without any reſerve or remedy; *wherein the wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men, that detain the truth in unrighteouſneſs.*

Eph. ii. 11. iv. 22. Rom. vi. 6. 1 Theſſ. iv. 3. Eph. v. 6. Col. iii. 6. Rom. i. 18. ii. 8.

An impure, a diſſolute, a paſſionate ſoul cannot affect ſo holy notions, cannot comply with ſo ſtrict rules, as the Goſpel doth recommend; as a ſore eye cannot like the bright day; as a ſickly palate cannot reliſh ſavoury food[c]. *Every one that doeth evil hateth the light,* becauſe it diſcovereth to him his own vileneſs and folly; becauſe it detecteth the ſadneſs and wofulneſs of his condition; becauſe it kindleth anguiſh and remorſe within him; becauſe it checketh him in the free purſuit of his bad deſigns, it dampeth the briſk enjoyment of his unlawful pleaſures, it robbeth him of ſatisfaction and glee in any vicious courſe of practice.

John iii. 20.

Every man is unwilling to entertain a bad conceit of himſelf, and to paſs on himſelf a ſad doom: he therefore will be apt to reject that doctrine, which being ſuppoſed true, he cannot but confeſs himſelf to be an arrant fool, he cannot but grant himſelf a forlorn wretch.

No man liketh to be galled, to be ſtung, to be racked with a ſenſe of guilt, to be ſcared with a dread of puniſhment, to live under awe and apprehenſion of imminent danger; gladly therefore would he ſhun that doctrine, which demonſtrateth him a grievous ſinner, which ſpeaketh diſmal terror, which thundereth ghaſtly woe upon him.

[c] Ἡ ἰμπαθὴς ψυχὴ οὐ δύναται μίγα τι καὶ γενναῖον ἰδεῖν, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ὑπὸ τινὸς λήμης θολουμένη ἀμβλυωπίαν ὑπομένει τὴν χαλεπωτάτην. *Chryſ. in Joh. Orat.* 25.

Ἔστι γὰρ, ἔστι καὶ ἀπὸ τρόπων διεφθαρμένων, οὐκ ἀπὸ πολυπραγμοσύνης μόνον ἀκαίρου σκοτωθῆναι τὴν διάνοιαν. *Ibid.*

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He cannot love that truth, which is ſo much his enemy, which ſo rudely treateth and ſeverely perſecuteth him; which telleth him ſo bad and unwelcome news [f].

Who would be content to deem Omnipotency engaged againſt him? to fancy himſelf ſtanding on the brink of a fiery lake? to hear a roaring lion, ready to devour him? to ſuppoſe that certain, which is ſo dreadful and ſad to him?

Rom. viii. 7. Job xxiv. 18. Ecclus. xv. 7.

Hence it is, that *the carnal mind is enmity to God;* hence do bad men *rebel againſt the light*; hence, *fooliſh men ſhall not attain to wiſdom, and ſinners ſhall not ſee her; for ſhe is far from pride, and men that are liars cannot remember her.*

Hence a man reſolvedly wicked cannot but be willing to be an infidel, in his own defence, for his own quiet and eaſe; faith being a companion very incommodious, intolerably troubleſome to a bad conſcience [g].

Being reſolved not to forſake his luſts, he muſt quit thoſe opinions which croſs them; ſeeing it expedient that the Goſpel ſhould be falſe, he will be inclinable to think it ſo: thus he ſinketh down, thus he tumbleth himſelf headlong into the gulf of infidelity.

The cuſtom of ſinning doth alſo by degrees ſo abate, and at length ſo deſtroy, the loathſomeneſs, the uglineſs, the horror thereof, doth ſo reconcile it to our minds, yea conciliateth ſuch a friendſhip to it, that we cannot eaſily believe it ſo horrid and baſe a thing as by the Goſpel it is repreſented to us.

ἡ πονηρία φθαρτικὴ τῶν ἀρχῶν. *Vid. Chryſ. in Joh. Or.* 3. (p. 582.)

Vicious practice doth alſo weaken the judgment and ſtupify the faculties. So that we cannot clearly apprehend, or judge ſoundly about ſpiritual matters.

The ſame alſo quencheth God's Spirit, and driveth away

[f] They hated knowledge, and did not chooſe the fear of the Lord. Prov. i. 29. v. 32.

[g] Τὸ ἀπιστῶν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς ἐκ τοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν ἐκλελύσθαι τῶν ἐντολῶν γίνεται, &c. *Chryſ.* tom. vi. *Orat.* 12. (p. 140.)

Ὥστε εἰ μέλλομεν ἐρρίζωμένην ἔχειν τὴν πίστιν, πολιτείας ἡμῖν δεῖ καθαρᾶς, τῆς τὸ πνεῦμα πειθούσης μένειν, καὶ συνέχειν ἐκείνης τὴν δύναμιν· Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν, οὐκ ἐστὶ βίον ἀκάθαρτον ἔχοντα μὴ περὶ πίστιν σαλεύεσθαι, &c. *Chryſ.* tom. v. *Or.* 55.

his grace, which is requiſite to the production and preſervation of faith in us.

14. In fine, from what ſpirit infidelity doth proceed we may ſee by the principles, commonly with it eſpouſed, for its ſupport and countenance, by its great maſters and patrons; all which do rankly ſavour of baſeneſs and ill-nature.

They do libel and revile mankind as void of all true goodneſs; from the worſt qualities, of which they are conſcious themſelves or can obſerve in others, patching up an odious character of it; thus ſhrowding themſelves under common blame from that which is due to their own wickedneſs; and diſpenſing with that charity and honeſty, which is by God's law required from them toward their neighbour: and having ſo bad an opinion of all men, they conſequently muſt bear ill-will toward them; it not being poſſible to love that which we do not eſteem.

They allow nothing in man to be immaterial, or immortal; ſo turning him into a beaſt, or into a puppet, a whirligig of fate or chance.

They aſcribe all actions and events to neceſſity, or external impulſe, ſo raſing the grounds of juſtice and all virtue; that no man may ſeem reſponſible for what he doth, commendable or culpable, amiable or deteſtable.

They explode all natural difference of good and evil; deriding benignity, mercy, pity, gratitude, ingenuity, that is, all inſtances of good-nature, as childiſh and ſilly diſpoſitions.

All the relics of God's image in man, which raiſe him above a beaſt, and diſtinguiſh him from a fiend, they ſcorn and expoſe to contempt.

They extol power as the moſt admirable, and diſparage goodneſs as a pitiful thing; ſo preferring a devil before an angel.

They diſcard conſcience, as a bugbear, to fright children and fools; allowing men to compaſs their deſigns by violence, fraud, ſlander, any wrongful ways; ſo baniſhing all the ſecurities (beſide ſelfiſhneſs and ſlaviſh fear) of

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government, converſation, and commerce; ſo that nothing ſhould hinder a man (if he can do it with advantage to himſelf and probable ſafety) to rebel againſt his prince, to betray his country, to abuſe his friend, to cheat any man with whom he dealeth.

Such are the principles (not only avowed in common diſcourſe, but taught and maintained in the writings) of our infidels; whereby the ſources of it do appear to be a deplorable blindneſs, and deſperate corruption of mind; an extinction of natural light, and extirpation of good-nature. Farther,

III. The naughtineſs of infidelity will appear by conſidering its effects and conſequences; which are plainly a ſpawn of all vices and villanies, a deluge of all miſchiefs and outrages upon the earth: for faith being removed, together with it all conſcience goeth; no virtue can remain; all ſobriety of mind, all juſtice in dealing, all ſecurity in converſation are packed away; nothing reſteth to encourage men unto any good, or reſtrain them from any evil; all hopes of reward from God, all fears of puniſhment from him being diſcarded. No principle, or rule of practice, is left, beſide brutiſh ſenſuality, fond ſelf-love, private intereſt, in their higheſt pitch, without any bound or curb; which therefore will diſpoſe men to do nothing but to prey on each other, with all cruel violence and baſe treachery. Every man thence will be a god to himſelf, a fiend to each other; ſo that neceſſarily the world will thence be turned into a chaos and a hell, full of iniquity and impurity, of ſpite and rage, of miſery and torment. It depriveth each man of all hope from Providence, all comfort and ſupport in affliction, of all ſatisfaction in conſcience; of all the good things which faith doth yield.

The conſideration of which numberleſs and unſpeakable miſchiefs hath engaged ſtateſmen in every commonwealth to ſupport ſome kind of faith, as needful to the maintenance of public order, of traffick, of peace among men.

It would ſuffice to perſuade an infidel, that hath a ſcrap

of wit, (for his own intereſt, ſafety, and pleaſure,) to cheriſh faith in others, and wiſh all men beſide himſelf endued with it.

It in reaſon obligeth all men to deteſt atheiſtical ſupplanters of faith, as deſperate enemies to mankind, enemies to government, deſtructive of common ſociety; eſpecially conſidering that of all religions that ever were, or can be, the Chriſtian doth moſt conduce to the benefit of public ſociety; enjoining all virtues uſeful to preſerve it in a quiet and flouriſhing ſtate, teaching loyalty under pain of damnation.

I paſs by, that *without faith no man can pleaſe God;* Heb. xi. 6. that infidelity doth expoſe men to his wrath and ſevereſt vengeance; that it depriveth of all joy and happineſs; ſeeing infidels will not grant ſuch effects to follow their ſin, but will reject the ſuppoſition of them as precarious and fictitious.

To conclude therefore the point, it is, from what we have ſaid, ſufficiently manifeſt, that infidelity is a very ſinful diſtemper, as being in its nature ſo bad, being the daughter of ſo bad cauſes, the ſiſter of ſo bad adjuncts, the mother of ſo bad effects.

But this you will ſay is an improper ſubject: for is there any ſuch thing as infidelity in Chriſtendom? are we not all Chriſtians, all believers, all baptized into the faith, and profeſſors of it? do we not every day repeat the Creed, or at leaſt ſay Amen thereto? do we not partake of the holy myſteries, ſealing this profeſſion? what do you take us for? for Pagans? this is a ſubject to be treated of in Turkey, or *in partibus infidelium.* This may be ſaid: but if we conſider better, we ſhall find ground more than enough for ſuch diſcourſe; and that infidelity hath a larger territory than we ſuppoſe: for (to paſs over the ſwarms of atheiſtical apoſtates, which ſo openly abound, denying or queſtioning our religion) many infidels do lurk under the maſk of Chriſtian profeſſion. It is not the name of Chriſtian, or the badges of our religion, that make a Chriſtian; no more than a cowl doth make a monk, or the beard a philoſopher: there may be a creed in the

SERM. I. mouth, where there is no faith in the heart, and a croſs impreſſed on the forehead of an infidel; *with the heart man believeth to righteouſneſs. Shew me thy faith by thy works*, ſaith St. James: if no works be ſhewed, no faith is to be granted; as where no fruit, there no root, or a dead root, which in effect and moral eſteem is none at all.

Rom. x. 8. Jam. ii. 18.

Is he not an infidel, who denieth God? ſuch a renegado is every one that liveth profanely, as St. Paul telleth us. And have we not many ſuch renegadoes? if not, what meaneth that monſtrous diſſoluteneſs of life, that horrid profaneneſs of diſcourſe, that ſtrange neglect of God's ſervice, a deſolation of God's law? Where ſuch luxury, ſuch lewdneſs, ſuch avarice, ſuch uncharitableneſs, ſuch univerſal carnality doth reign, can faith be there? can a man believe there is a God, and ſo affront him? can he believe that Chriſt reigneth in heaven, and ſo deſpiſe his laws? can a man believe a judgment to come, and ſo little regard his life; a heaven, and ſo little ſeek it; a hell, and ſo little ſhun it?—Faith therefore is not ſo rife, infidelity is more common than we may take it to be; every ſin hath a ſpice of it, ſome ſins ſmell rankly of it.

Tit. i. 16.

To it are attributed all the rebellions of the Iſraelites, which are the types of all Chriſtian profeſſors, who ſeem travellers in this earthly wilderneſs toward the heavenly Canaan; and to it all the enormities of ſin and overflowings of iniquity may be aſcribed.

I ſhould proceed to urge the precept, that we *take heed thereof*; but the time will not allow me to do it: I ſhall only ſuggeſt to your meditation the heads of things.

It is infidelity, that maketh men covetous, uncharitable, diſcontent, puſillanimous, impatient.

Becauſe men believe not Providence, therefore they do ſo greedily ſcrape and hoard.

They do not believe any reward for charity, therefore they will part with nothing.

They do not hope for ſuccour from God, therefore are they diſcontent and impatient.

They have nothing to raiſe their ſpirits, therefore are they abject.

Infidelity did cauſe the Devil's apoſtaſy.

Infidelity did baniſh man from Paradiſe, (truſting to the Devil, and diſtruſting God's word.)

Infidelity (diſregarding the warnings and threats of God) did bring the deluge on the world.

Infidelity did keep the Iſraelites from entering into Caman, the type of heaven; as the Apoſtle to the Hebrews doth inſiſt. Heb. iii. 19. iv. 6, &c.

Infidelity indeed is the root of all ſin; for did men heartily believe the promiſes to obedience, and the threats to diſobedience, they could hardly be ſo unreaſonable as to forfeit the one, or incur the other: did they believe that the omnipotent, all-wiſe, moſt juſt and ſevere God did command and require ſuch a practice, they could hardly dare to omit or tranſgreſs.

Let it therefore ſuffice to have declared the evil of infidelity, which alone is ſufficient inducement to avoid it.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON II.

OF THE VIRTUE AND REASONABLENESS OF FAITH.

2 Pet. i. 1.

——*to them that have obtained like precious faith with us.*

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THE Holy Scripture recommendeth faith (that is, a hearty and firm perſuaſion concerning the principal doctrines of our religion, from divine revelation taught by our Lord and his Apoſtles) as a moſt *precious* and *honourable* practice; as a virtue of the firſt magnitude, very commendable in itſelf, very acceptable to God, very beneficial to us; having moſt excellent fruits growing from it, moſt noble privileges annexed to it, moſt ample rewards aſſigned for it.

1 Pet. i. 7.

Heb. xi. 6. John xvi. 27.

It is in a ſpecial manner commanded, and obedience to that command is reckoned a prime inſtance of piety: *This is his commandment, that we ſhould believe; this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent.*

1 John iii. 23. John vi. 29.

It is the root of our ſpiritual life; for, *He that cometh to God muſt believe;* and, *Add to your faith virtue,* ſaith St. Peter, ſuppoſing faith to precede other virtues.

Heb. xi. 6. 2 Pet. i. 5.

It is the principal conduit of divine grace; for

By it we are regenerated, and become the ſons of God;

Ye all, ſaith St. Paul, *are the ſons of God by faith in Chriſt Jeſus.* Gal. iii. 26.

By it we *abide in God*, and do *poſſeſs* him, ſaith St. John. John i. 12. 1 Joh. ii. 24.

By it *Chriſt dwelleth in us*, ſaith St. Paul. 2 John ix.

By it we obtain God's Spirit: *Did ye*, ſaith St. Paul, *receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* Eph. iii. 17. Gal. iii. 2, 14.

By it we are juſtified, or acquitted from guilt, and condemnation for ſin: for, *Being juſtified by faith we have peace with God.* Eph. i. 18. Acts ii. 38. v. 32. John vii. 38. Rom. iii. 25. v. 1. x. 10.

By it our *hearts are purged*, ſaith St. Paul; *our ſouls are purified*, ſaith St. Peter. Acts xxvi. 18. x. 43. Acts xv. 9. 1 Pet. i. 22.

By it we are freed from the dominion of ſin; according to that of our Saviour; *If ye abide in my word,—ye ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall ſet you free.* John viii. 31.

It procureth freedom of acceſs to God; *We have*, ſaith St. Paul, *boldneſs and acceſs with confidence by the faith of him.* Eph. iii. 12. Heb. x. 22.

It is the *ſhield*, whereby we *reſiſt* temptations; and the weapon, whereby we *overcome the world.* Eph. vi. 16. 1 Pet. v. 9. 1 John v. 5.

In fine, it is that, which being *retained in a good conſcience*, and maintained by virtuous practice, doth keep us in a ſtate of ſalvation, and will aſſuredly convey us into eternal life and felicity; for, *by grace we are ſaved, through faith.* 1 Tim. i. 19. iii. 9. i. 5. Eph. ii. 8. Rom. x. 10. viii. 24. i. 16. Heb. x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 9. Luke viii. 12. Acts xvi. 30, 31. 2 Theſſ. ii. 10.

That faith ſhould be thus highly dignified, hath always appeared ſtrange to the adverſaries of our religion[a]; and hath ſuggeſted to them matter of obloquy againſt it: they could not apprehend why we ſhould be commanded, or how we can be obliged to believe; as if it were an arbitrary thing, depending on our free choice, and not rather did naturally follow the repreſentation of objects to our mind: they would not allow that an act of our under-

[a] Πίστιν —— ἣν διαβάλλουσι, κενὴν καὶ βάρβαρον νομίζοντες Ἕλληνες. *Clem. Str.* ii. (p. 265.)

Pagani nobis objicere ſolent, quod religio noſtra, quia quaſi rationibus deficit, in ſola credendi perſuaſione conſiſtat. *Ruff. in Symb.*

Ἀδίκημα καὶ δικαιοπράγημα ὥρισται τῷ ἑκουσίῳ & ἀκουσίῳ. *Ariſt. Eth.* v. 8. iii. 1.

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ſtanding, hardly voluntary, as being extorted by force of arguments, ſhould deſerve ſuch reputation and ſuch recompenſes; for if, argued they, a doctrine be propounded with evident and cogent reaſon, what virtue is there in believing it, ſeeing a man in that caſe cannot avoid believing, is therein merely paſſive, and by irreſiſtible force ſubdued? if it be propounded without ſuch reaſon, what fault can it be to refuſe aſſent, or to ſuſpend his opinion about it? can a wiſe man then do otherwiſe? is it not in ſuch a caſe ſimplicity, or fond credulity, to yield aſſent? yea, is it not deceit or hypocriſy to pretend the doing ſo? may not juſtly then all the blame be charged rather on the incredibility of the doctrine, or the infirmity of reaſons enforcing it, than on the incredulity of the perſon who doth not admit it? whence no philoſophers ever did impoſe ſuch a precept, or did aſſign to faith a place among the virtues.

Prov. xiv. 15.

To clear this matter, and to vindicate our religion from ſuch miſpriſions, and that we may be engaged to prize and cheriſh it; I ſhall endeavour to declare, that Chriſtian faith doth worthily deſerve all the commendations and the advantages granted thereto: this I ſhall do by conſidering its nature and ingredients, its riſe and cauſes, its efficacy and conſequences.

Πίστις οὖν εἰς τὸν Θεὸν γνώσεως ἀναγκαιοτάτη. *Chryſ.* tom. v. *Or.* 35.

I. As to its nature; it doth involve knowledge, knowledge of moſt worthy and important truths, knowledge peculiar and not otherwiſe attainable, knowledge in way of great evidence and aſſurance.

1. [b] Truth is the natural food of our ſoul, toward which it hath a greedy appetite, which it taſteth with delicious complacency, which being taken in and digeſted by it doth render it luſty, plump, and active: truth is the ſpecial ornament of our mind, decking it with a graceful and pleaſant luſtre; truth is the proper wealth of reaſon, whereof having acquired a good ſtock, it appeareth rich, proſperous, and mighty: what light is without, that is

Pſal. cxix. 142, 151.

[b] Ἀλήθεια δὴ πάντων μὲν ἀγαθῶν θεοῖς ἡγεῖται, πάντων δὲ ἀνθρώποις. *Plat. de Leg.* v. (p. 461.) *de Rep.* vi. (p. 675.)

truth within, ſhining on our inward world, illuſtrating, quickening, and comforting all things there, exciting all our faculties to action, and guiding them in it. All knowledge therefore, which is the poſſeſſion of truth, is much eſteemed; even that which reſpecteth objects mean, and little concerning us, (ſuch as human ſciences are converſant about; natural appearances, hiſtorical events, the properties, proportions, and powers of figure, of motion, of corporeal force,) doth bear a good price, as perfective of rational nature, enriching, adorning, invigorating our mind; whence Ariſtotle doubteth not upon all thoſe habitual endowments, which ſo accompliſh our underſtanding, to beſtow the name of virtues; that with him being the *virtue of each thing, which anywiſe perfecteth it, and diſpoſeth it for action ſuitable to its nature.* And if ignorance, error, doubt, are defects, deformities, infirmities of our ſoul, then the knowledge which removeth them doth imply the perfection, beauty, and vigour thereof. Faith therefore, as implying knowledge, is valuable.

Πᾶσα ἀρετὴ, ὃ ἂν ᾖ ἀρετὴ, αὐτό τι εὖ ἔχον ἀποτελεῖ, καὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ εὖ ἀποδίδωσι. *Ariſt. Eth.* ii. 6.

2. But it is much more ſo, in regard to the quality of its objects, which are the moſt worthy that can be, and moſt uſeful for us to know; the knowledge whereof doth indeed advance our ſoul into a better ſtate, doth ennoble, enrich, and embelliſh our nature; doth raiſe us to a nearer reſemblance with God, and participation of his wiſdom; doth infuſe pureſt delight and ſatisfaction into our hearts; doth qualify and direct us unto practice moſt conducible to our welfare; it is a knowledge, *enlightening the eyes, converting the ſoul, rejoicing the heart; ſweeter than honey, and the honeycomb; more precious than rubies;* which *giveth to* our head an *ornament of grace,* and *a crown of glory.* For,'

Pſal. xix. 7, 8, 9, 10. (cxix. 103, 111.) Prov. iii. 15. iv. 9.

Thereby we underſtand the nature, or the principal attributes of God, of whom only the Chriſtian doctrine doth afford a completely true and worthy character, directive of our eſteem, our worſhip, our obedience, our imitation of him; whereby our demeanour toward him may become him, and pleaſe him.

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By it we are fully acquainted with the will and intentions of God, relating both to our duty and our recompenſe; what he requireth from us, and what he deſigneth for us; upon what terms he will proceed with us in way of grace, of mercy, of juſtice.

By it we are informed concerning ourſelves, what our frame is, whence our original, to what ends we are deſigned, wherein our felicity doth conſiſt, and how it is attainable.

It enableth us rightly to diſtinguiſh between good and bad, right and wrong; what is worthy of us, and pleaſing to God, what miſbecoming us, and offenſive to him; both abſolutely and comparatively, according to the degrees of each caſe reſpectively.

It preſcribeth us an exact rule of life, comprising all our duties toward God, our neighbour, ourſelves; to obſerve which will be moſt decent, and exceedingly profitable to us.

It teacheth us from what principles, and upon what grounds we ſhould act, that our practice ſhould be truly good and laudable.

It propoſeth the moſt valid inducements to virtue, tendering the favour of God and eternal bliſs in reward thereof, menacing divine wrath and endleſs woe upon its neglect.

It diſcovereth the ſpecial aids diſpenſed to us for the ſupport of our weakneſs againſt all temptations and diſcouragements incident to us through the courſe of our life.

The knowledge of theſe things is plainly the top of all knowledge whereof we are capable; not conſiſting in barren notion, not gratifying idle curioſity, not ſerving trivial purpoſes, but really bettering our ſouls, producing moſt goodly and wholeſome fruits, tending to ends moſt noble and worthy: this indeed is the higheſt philoſophy; the true culture, and medicine of our ſoul; the true guide of life, and miſtreſs of action; the mother of all virtues; the beſt invention of God, and rareſt gift of heaven to

men[c]: for these commendations, by Pagan sages ascribed to their philosophy, do in truth solely belong to that knowledge, which by faith we do possess: their philosophy could not reach such truths[d]; it could not so much as aim at some of them; it did but weakly attempt at any: it did indeed pretend to the knowledge of divine and human things, (this being its definition, current among them,) but it had no competent means of attaining either in any considerable measure[e]; for divine things (the nature of him who *dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto;* the intentions of him, who *worketh all things after the counsel of his will;* the *ways of him, which are more distested from our ways, than heaven from earth;* the *depths of God, which none but his own Spirit can search out,* or discover) do lie beyond the sphere of natural light, and inquisition of our reason: and as for human things, the chief of them have such a connection with divine things, that who were ignorant of the one could nowise descry the other; wherefore those candidates of knowledge, notwithstanding their lofty pretences, were fain to rest in a low form, employing their studies on inferior things, *the obscurity of nature, the subtilty of discourse,* and *moral precepts of life*[f]; such precepts, as their glimmering light and common experience did suggest; for even in points of common morality and prudence human wit can but fumble, as by the great clashing and jangling about them is very notorious.

1 Tim. vi. 16. Eph. i. 11. Isa. lv. 9. 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

3. Faith also hath this excellent advantage, that it endueth us with such knowledge in a very clear and sure way, comparable to that whereby the theorems of any science are known; it not being grounded on any slippery deduc-

[c] Cultura animi, *Cic. Tusc.* 1. Medicina animi, *Tusc.* 3. O vitæ philosophia dux, &c. *Tusc.* 5. *de Leg.* 1. *de Fin.* 3. Nec ullum arbitror, ut apud Platonem est, majus aut melius a Diis datum munus homini. *Acad.* 1. *Tusc.* 1.

[d] Omnis optimarum rerum cognitio, atque in iis exercitatio Philosophia nominatur. *De Orat.* 8.

[e] Οὐκ ἐγγὺς ἐδιδάσκαλοι περὶ Θεοῦ λέγοντες ἀνθρωποι καθ' ἀνθρωπου, &c. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* vi. p. 501.

[f] Philosophia in tres partes distributa est, in naturæ obscuritatem, in differendi subtilitatem, in vitam atque mores. *Cic. de Orat.* 1.

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tion of reason, nor on slender conjectures of fancy, nor on musty traditions or popular rumours; but upon the infallible testimony of God, conveyed unto us by powerful evidence, striking all capacities, apt with equal influence to enlighten the simple and to convince the wise. For want of this all human wisdom was so blind and lame; so various, so uncertain; nothing but confusion, unsettlement, and dissatisfaction arising from mere ratiocination; which being destitute of light and aid from heaven, doth ever grope in the dark, doth rove after shadows of truth, is bewildered in mazes of intricacy, wherein things lie involved; whence all philosophy did consist in faint guesses, plausible discourses, and endless disputes about matters of highest consequence, such as the original of the world, the administration of human things, the nature and subsistence of our soul, the way to happiness; none being able about such points to conclude with resolution, or to assert with confidence [g]; so that in effect all the philosophers might be ranged under one great sect of *sceptics*, or *seekers*, the most advised and best disposed among them, in result of their most diligent speculations, appearing very doubtful.

Acts xvii. 27, 30.

2 Pet. i. 19. But we have, as St. Peter saith, *βεβαιότερον λόγον, a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to give heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place*, guiding us in the obscurities and uncertainties of life; we have *a hope, as an anchor of the soul both sure and stable* [h]; which stayeth and settleth our mind, being tossed with winds and waves of uncertain cogitations, suggested by different appearances of things.

Heb. vi. 19.

g Ὁ μὴ ἐκ πίστεως βεβηθέμενος, ἀλλ' οἴκοθεν ἐπὶ τὸν λόγον ἐρχόμενος, ταῖς ἀνθρωπίναις παρασκευαῖς πρὸς τὴν κατάληψιν τῆς ἀληθείας θαῤῥῶν, ψεύστης ἐστὶ, παραπολὺ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐκπίπτων. *Bas. in Isa.* xv. Ὅλως δὲ ἡ ἄνευ πίστεως ἐπὶ τὸ λαλεῖν ἐρχομένη ψυχὴ δεινῶς ληρεῖ. *Ibid.*

Hanc ego perfectam Philosophiam semper judicavi, quæ de maximis quæstionibus copiose posset, ornateque dicere. *Cic. Tusc.* 5. *Vid. in M. Ant. Comm.* p. 143. *Chrys. in Joh. Or.* 63. Οὐδὲν γὰρ ὅτι ποιεῖ σπουδαῖον ἡ ἀνθρώπινος λογισμὸς, ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς πάντα φθεγγόμενος, καὶ μὴ ἀνεχόμενος φωτίζεσθαι ἄνωθεν, &c. *Chrys. in Joh. Or.* 25.

h Τὴν ψυχὴν τὴν ἡμετέραν σεσαλευμένην, καὶ περιφερομένην ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν λογισμῶν ἀσθενείας, &c. *Chrys.* tom. v. *Orat.* 53.

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Hence, as St. Chryſoſtom is wont to inſiſt, by virtue of faith ruſtic and mechanic idiots do in true knowledge ſurpaſs the moſt refined wits, and children prove wiſer than old philoſophers: an idiot can tell us that, which a learned infidel doth not know; a child can aſſure us that, wherein a deep philoſopher is not reſolved[i]: for aſk a boor, aſk a boy educated in our religion, who made him, he will tell you, God Almighty; which is more than Ariſtotle or Democritus would have told: demand of him why he was made, he will anſwer you, to ſerve and glorify his Maker; and hardly would Pythagoras or Plato have replied ſo wiſely: examine him concerning his ſoul, he will aver, that it is immortal; that it ſhall undergo a judgment after this life, that accordingly it ſhall abide in a ſtate of bliſs or miſery everlaſting; about which points neither Socrates nor Seneca could aſſure any thing: inquire of him how things are upheld, how governed and ordered, he preſently will reply, by the powerful hand and wiſe providence of God; whereas among philoſophers one would aſcribe all events to the current of fate, another to the tides of fortune; one to blind influences of ſtars, another to a confuſed jumble of atoms: poſe him about the main points of morality and duty; and he will in few words better inform you than Cicero, or Epictetus, or Ariſtotle, or Plutarch, in their large tracts and voluminous diſcourſes about matters of that nature.

Chryſ. tom. vi. Or. 61. (p. 633.)

So real a property it is of God's law *to give ſubtilty to the ſimple, to the young man knowledge and diſcretion;* ſo true it is, that our Lord affirmeth of himſelf, *I came a light into the world, that he who believeth in me may not abide in darkneſs;* ſo juſtly doth St. Paul affirm concerning divine revelation, that *it is able to make a man wiſe unto ſalvation, through faith, which is in Chriſt Jeſus;* being *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works.* This is

Prov. i. 4. Pſal. xix. 7. cxix. 9, 100, 130. John xii. 46. viii. 12.

2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17.

[i] Τίς ἐκ ἂν αὐτίθιν μάθοι τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν, ἢ τοὺς ἀγραμμάτους καὶ ἰδιώτας τῶν μέγα ἐπὶ σοφίᾳ πεμπαυχόντων τούτῳ σοφωτέρους ἀπέδειξεν, ὅσῳ τῶν μικρῶν παιδίων τοὺς ἔμφρονας ἄνδρας ὑπερέχοντάς ἐστιν ἰδεῖν, &c. *Chryſ.* Ἀνδρ. 19.

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Iſ. xxxv. 8.

II. It hath alſo divers ingredients, or inſeparable adjuncts, which it doth imply, rendering it commendable and acceptable to God. As,

1. Faith implieth a good uſe of reaſon. This is that which commendeth any virtue, that a man acting after it, doth act wiſely, in conformity to the frame and deſign of his nature, or like a rational creature; uſing his beſt faculties in the beſt manner, and in their proper operations toward the end intended by the all-wiſe Creator: this is that, upon which all diſpenſation of juſtice is founded, a man being accountable for the uſe of his reaſon, ſo as to deſerve reward for the right management, and puniſhment for the miſuſe thereof; this is that conſequently, whereon God ſo often declareth himſelf to ground his judgment; ſo that in effect he will juſtify men for being wiſe, and condemn them as guilty of folly; whence in the holy ſtyle wiſdom, and virtue or piety, are terms equivalent; and a fool doth ſignify the ſame with a vicious or impious perſon. And if ever a man deſerveth commendation for well uſing his reaſon, it is then, when upon mature deliberation he doth embrace the Chriſtian doctrine; for ſo doing is a moſt rational act, arguing the perſon to be ſagacious, conſiderate, and judicious; one, who doth carefully inquire into things, doth ſeriouſly weigh the caſe, doth judge ſoundly about it.

Πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τὸν λόγον τὸν ὀρθὸν, τοῦτο ἁμάρτημά ἐστι, &c. *Clem. Alex. Pæd.* i. 13.

Deut. iv. 6. xxxii. 29. Pſ. cxi. 10. Job xxviii. 28. Prov. i. 7, 9, 10.

It was a foul aſperſion caſt upon our religion by its ancient oppoſers, that it did require ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν, *a mere belief, void of reaſon*[k]; challenging aſſent to its doctrines without any trial or proof. This ſuggeſtion, if true, were, I confeſs, a mighty prejudice againſt it, and no man indeed juſtly could be obliged to admit it upon ſuch terms: but it is really a groſs calumny; ſuch a proceed-

[k] Μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευον. *Orig. in Celſ.* (p. 84.)

Πίστευον, εἰ σωθῆναι θέλεις, ἢ ἄπιθι. *Id. in Celſ.* vi. (p. 282.)

Ὁ ταῦτα πιστεύσας οὐχ ἁπλῶς οὐδὲ ἀλόγως, ἀλλὰ κρίσει καὶ πληροφορίᾳ χάρισμα εἴληφεν ἐκ Θεοῦ. *Conſt. Apoſt.* viii. 1.

ing being disclaimed by the teachers and advocates of our religion, being repugnant to the nature and tenor thereof; being prejudicial to its interest and design; being contrary to its use and practice [l]. Never any religion was indeed so little liable to the censure of obtruding itself on men's credulity, none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to scan and sift its pretences; yea provoked them for its sake and their own, upon most important considerations, (at the peril of their souls, as they tendered their own best advantage,) to a fair, discreet, careful examination thereof. Other religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of ancestors, custom and prescription of times, large extent and prevalence among crews of people, establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers, (arguments extrinsecal, and of small validity in any case,) declining all other test and verdict of reason: but our religion confideth in itself, and the pure merit of its cause; and therefore warneth men, in a case of such moment, laying aside all prejudice, to employ their best understandings on an industrious and impartial search of the truth; referring the decision and result, so far as concerneth each particular man, to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which God, in order to such purposes, hath endued every person.

Εἰγκίμενον ἐξέτασις. *Orig.*

Lact. ii. 6.

Lact. ii. 7.

It indeed ordinarily doth refuse a sudden and precipitate assent, admitting no man, capable of judging and choosing for himself, to the participation of it, or to the name and privileges of a worthy believer, until after a competent time and opportunities of instruction, he can approve himself to understand it well, and doth avow himself to be cordially persuaded of its truth.

Such is its method, and it hath not any need of other; God having provided and exhibited arguments abundantly sufficient to convince any man of its truth, who is not

[l] Δίχεσθε, φησὶν, ἀπλῶς τὰ λεγόμενα, καὶ μηδεὶς ἐξεταζέτω τι πρότερον ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ τι ὑστερεῖ· καὶ πόσον ἐπαμύξει τὴν ἀδικαίωτον ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀτάκτοις καὶ ἀναπόδεικτος ἐπὶ βλάβῃ συγκατάθεσιν. *Athan.* tom. ii. p. 325. *de Arianis.*

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affectedly blind and ſtupid, or wantonly ſlothful and careleſs, or frowardly ſtiff and obſtinate.

What indeed better arguments (conſidering the nature of the objects which faith reſpecteth, being things ſpiritual and inviſible; conſidering alſo the capacities of perſons concerned, being all ſorts of people, wiſe and ſimple, learned and rude) could we have, or could we need, than the conſpicuous excellency and uſefulneſs of the doctrine, approving itſelf to the mind, and confirming itſelf by palpable experience of moſt happy fruits, ſpringing from a practice conformable thereto; than its exact correſpondence to manifold ancient preſignifications and predictions concerning it; than ſpecial atteſtations of God thereto, not only by audible voices, and viſible apparitions from heaven, but alſo by innumerable miraculous works; than the concurrence of divine Providence in ſtrange methods to the propagation and maintenance of it; than the bleſſings and conſolations, attending a faithful obſervance of it? what ſubtilty of diſcourſe, what charm of eloquence could ſerve to evince and impreſs the great truths concerning the attributes, providence, will, commands, and promiſes of God;[m] concerning the immortal ſubſiſtence of our ſoul, the future judgment, the everlaſting rewards hereafter, with ſuch evidence and ſuch force, to the common and vulgar reaſon, or indeed to any reaſon of man, as do theſe plain arguments, needing no reach of wit or depth of judgment to ſound their meaning, or feel their ſtrength?

1 Pet. i. 10.

Heb. ii. 4. Acts iv. 33. xix. 20.

John vii. 17. Acts v. 32.

But if any man be too wiſe to be pleaſed with ſuch downright and eaſy ways of conviction, reaſon itſelf, well followed, would lead him hither, and ſerve to produce faith in him; for that there is a God, reaſon from obſervation of appearances in nature and providence will collect; that goodneſs is one of his principal attributes, reaſon from the ſame grounds will infer; that God hath an eſpecial regard to men will thence alſo become notorious;

[m] Τί ἀναγκαιοτέρον εἰς συγκατάθεσιν, εἰπέ μοι, προσάγειν τολμᾷ τὸ συμπέρασμα ἀπόλυθον ἑαυτοῦ ἐφιλόμενον, ἢ θαῦμα ποιοῦντον ἐνεργῶς ὁρώμενον, πᾶσαν ἀνθρώπου δύναμιν ὑπερβαῖνον. *Baſ. in Pſal.* cxv.

that consequently God will vouchsafe his guidance to men in their way toward happiness, will appear reasonable to conceive; that God hath not done this in any other way, reason, comparing and weighing things, will easily discern; that Christian doctrine may fairly pretend thereto, reason soon will admit; so hath reason led us to the door of faith, and being arrived thither, will (if our will be not averse) easily find entrance.

Hence God doth not only allow, but enjoin us to use our best reason in judging of this doctrine, whether it be from him, and worthy of our acceptance; he doth not bid us to retire into the dark, to shut our eyes, or to wink, when we receive it; but chargeth us to go into the clearest light; to open our eyes wide, to view it thoroughly with our best senses and sharpest attention, before we do yield our consent and approbation to it: his precepts are, that *we examine all things, and hold fast that which is good;* that we *believe not every spirit,* (or revelation pretended,) but *try the spirits, whether they be of God;* that we stand on our guard, and *take heed that no man deceive us;* that we *be not fools,* nor *children in understanding;* but *wise,* and *perfect men;* that we *compare things different,* and *try what is well pleasing to God;* that we be *always ready with meekness and modesty to render unto every man demanding it an account of the hope in us.*

John iii. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 9. Acts xxvi. 18. 1 Thess. v. 21. 1 John iv. 1. Matt. xxiv. 4. Eph. v. 6. 15, 17. 1 Cor. xiv. 20. Eph. v. 10. Rom. xii. 2. 1 Cor. x. 15. Rom. i. 18. Phil. i. 10. 1 Pet. iii. 15.

He therefore doth expostulate with men for their dulness, their incogitancy, their sluggishness, their folly, as the causes of their unbelief; declaring that in respect to such defaults, wilfully incurred, he will proceed to condemn it; *He,* saith our Lord, *that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day;* and, *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; If I had not come and spoken unto them——if I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin.* Our Lord, we see, did not urge his bare authority, or exact a faith without ground; but he claimeth it as due upon two most rational accounts; his convincing discourses, and his unparalleled works; which from

Luke xxiv. 45. John xii. 48. John x. 37. xv. 22, 24.

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John vii. 46. iii. 2. Indeed, if we seriously do weigh the case, we shall find, that to require faith without reason is to demand an impossibility; for faith is an effect of persuasion, and persuasion is nothing else but the application of some reason to the mind, apt to draw forth its assent; no man therefore can believe he knoweth not what or why: he that truly believeth, must apprehend the proposition, and he must discern its connection with some principle of truth, which as more notorious to him he before doth admit; otherwise he doth only pretend to believe, out of some design, or from affection to some party; his faith is not so much really faith, as hypocrisy, craft, fondness, or faction.

God therefore neither doth nor can enjoin us faith without reason; but therefore doth require it, as matter of duty, from us, because he hath furnished sufficient reason to persuade us; and having made his doctrine credi-
1 Tim. i. 15. ble, (*a faithful*, or credible, *word, and worthy of all acceptation;*) having given us reason chiefly to be employed in such matters, as he justly may claim our assent, so he will take well our ready surrendry of it to him, as an act of reason and wisdom becoming us.

To yield unto reason fairly proposed and proved is in any case a laudable quality, signifying that a man hath his reason to purpose, that he is guided and governed thereby, not by humour or fancy; qualifying him for conversation and business, for which nothing rendereth a man more unfit than humorous incredulity, or obstinacy against reason. It is especially commendable in these cases, concerning our better part and final state, arguing a man to be sober and advised, affording regard to things best deserving it, employing his consideration in due place, being faithful and just to himself, in attending to his main concernments.

2. Faith implieth a compliance with the providence and grace of God; with his providence framing the economy of things to be believed, discovering it to the world by special revelation, furnishing motives apt to work faith,

dispensing opportunities of knowledge leading thereto; with his grace operating in our souls, by illustration of our minds to discern, attraction of our wills to embrace, inclination of our affections to relish and like the heavenly truths exhibited to us.

There is no man to whom means are not administered, sufficient to produce in him that measure of faith, which is requisite toward the good management of his life, and his rendering an account for it at God's tribunal; there is no man also, to whom such means are afforded, whom the grace of God, who *desireth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*, doth not in some degree excite to the due improvement of them; but in effect the case is varied, because some men do embrace those means, and comply with that grace, while others do reject or neglect them.

1 Tim. ii. 4.

Our Lord saith, that *every one, who hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, doth come unto him:* but some there are, to whom the Father speaketh, yet they *stop their ears, and refuse to hear;* some do hear in a sort, but do not learn, ill prejudices or depraved affections barring instruction from their mind; being like those of whom the Apostle saith, *The word heard did not profit them, being not mingled with faith in those which heard it.*

John vi. 45. Job xxxiii. 16. Zech. vii. 11. Ezek. iii. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 4. Acts vii. 57. Job xxxiii. 14. xxi. 14. Heb. iii. 7, 15. iv. 2.

No man, saith our Lord again, *can come unto me except the Father draw him:* but this attraction is not compulsory; we may hold back; we may withstand it, and not follow.

John vi. 44. v. 40. Matt. xxii. 3. Luke xiii. 34.

Faith, saith St. Paul, *is a gift of God*, and *a favour granted to us;* ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, *To you*, saith he, *it hath been graciously vouchsafed not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him;* and, *To you*, saith our Lord, *it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven:* but this gift is not always accepted, this favour is not always entertained; God doth not so obtrude it on us, but that we may reject or decline it.

Eph. ii. 8. Phil. i. 29. (Eph. i. 17, 18.) Matt. xiii. 11.

Faith is *a fruit of God's Spirit;* but such as will not grow in a bad soil, not purged from weeds of corrupt

Gal. v. 22. Matt. xvi. 17.

1 Cor. xii. 3, 9. 1 John ii. 20. iv. 2. 2 Cor. iv. 13. v. 20.

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prejudice, of vicious affection, of worldly care; which will not thrive without good care and culture.

God inviteth us to believe by the promulgation of his Gospel, and exhortation of his ministers; he declareth abundant reason to persuade us; he representeth to our minds the beauty of Christian truth and virtue; he speaketh from without unto us by manifold arguments, able, if we are not very stupid, to convince us; he speaketh within by strong impressions on our consciences, apt, if
Rev. iii. 20. we are not very stubborn, to subdue us; *Behold*, saith he, *I stand at the door, and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and will open the door, I will come in unto him:* such is the case; God standeth at the door of our heart by the ministry of his word, he knocketh at it by the impulse of his grace; but to hear is the work of our vigilance, to open is an act of our voluntary compliance.

2 Cor. iv. 6. Eph. i. 17, 18. *God*, saith St. Paul, *who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;* God shineth upon us by revelation of his truth, God shineth into us by illumination of his Spirit; the which through the ear doth convey the light of truth unto the heart: but we may by wilful obstruction exclude that light, shutting the windows of our heart against it; we may there quench it by foul affections, we may smo-
2 Cor. iii. 14. ther it in fogs of evil prejudice; we may dissipate it by troublesome cares; we may, by affected blindness, or
ἐπωρώθη τὰ νοήματα. drowsy negligence, render it indiscernible, or ineffectual to us; like those, of whom the Apostle there saith, that
2 Cor. iv. 4. *the god of this world had blinded the minds of those which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

Acts xiii. 46. A man may ἀπωθεῖσθαι τὸν λόγον, *thrust away the word*, as it is said of the Jews; he may, as others of the same
Acts vii. 51. stamp did, *resist the Spirit;* he may, as those worldlings in
Matt. xiii. 4, &c. the Gospel, let the seed *fall beside* him, or not *fall deep* into him, or *fall into thorns*, which may *choke it;* he
John iii. 20. may *hate the light*, and therefore *not come unto it;* or re-
i. 5.

bel against it, as those did in Job; he may, as the Pharisees did, *defeat the counsels*, and *cross the desires of God.*

And as to deal thus with God's word and providence, thus to treat his Spirit and grace, is heinously criminal, so to use them well is very acceptable to God's goodness: if we yield due regard to his providence, and an obsequious ear to his word; if we cheerfully do accept his gifts, and close with his overtures of mercy; if we concur with his motions, and farther his gracious designs, he will take it kindly of us; as therein acting becomingly toward him, and gratifying him in that wherein he most delighteth, which is the procurement of our good.

Job xxiv. 13. Luke vii. 30. Matt. xxiii. 37.

3. Faith doth imply good opinion of God, and good actions toward him.

God our parent hath stamped on our nature some lineaments of himself, whereby we resemble him; he hath implanted in our soul some roots of piety toward him; into our frame he hath inserted some propensions to acknowledge him, and to affect him; the which are excited and improved by observing the manifest footsteps of divine power, wisdom, and goodness, which occur in the works of nature and providence; to preserve and cherish these is very commendable; a man thereby keeping the precious relics of the divine image from utter defacement, retaining somewhat of his primitive worth and integrity; declaring that by ill usage he hath not quite shattered or spoiled his best faculties and inclinations.

Τὸ φυσικὸν φίλτρον πρὸς τὸν κτίσαντα. *Orig.*

Now that he who believeth hath thus managed himself, so as to have preserved in his soul those seeds of piety, apt to conspire with the influences of grace drawing to belief, doth appear from hence, that faith doth include an assent to divers points, so thwarting our carnal sense and gust, that without a good esteem of God, and good affection toward him, we hardly could admit them; *the carnal mind*, or brutish part within us, being, as St. Paul saith, *enmity to God*, and *uncapable of submission to his law*; the *sensual man being not able to receive the things of God, for they are foolishness to him*; to balance which repugnance and indisposition there must be some

Rom. viii. 7. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

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There can hardly be any greater inftance of refpect and love toward any perfon, than a ready yielding of affent to his words, when he doth aver things to our conceit abfurd or incredible; than refting on his promife, when he feemeth to offer things impoffible, or ftrangely difficult; than embracing his advice, when he recommendeth things very crofs to our intereft, humour, and pleafure; whence Abraham's faith (expreffed in hoping for a fon in his decrepit age, and in offering up that fon, who was fo dear to him, who was *the heir of promife*, the prop of his family and hope) is fo magnified, as an argument of exceeding refpect and affection toward God:

Jam. ii. 23. *Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteoufnefs, and he was called the friend of God;* it was a great evidence of his friendfhip, that *againft hope he believed in hope, being fully perfuaded that what God had promifed, he was able to perform;* and therefore *it was imputed to him for righteoufnefs;* or accepted by God, as a fignal act of goodnefs, whereby he did teftify his immoveable opinion concerning the power, fidelity, and benignity of God, together with anfwerable good-will toward him.

Rom. iv. 18, 21, 22. Heb. xi. 19. 11.

And many things doth the Chriftian doctrine propofe, apt to try fuch a friendfhip; many a *hard faying* doth it affert, which a profane mind can hardly fwallow or digeft; there is indeed fcarce any article of faith, at which we fhall not boggle; any matter of duty, which we fhall not ftart at, any promife of God, whereat we fhall not ftagger, if we be not feafoned with favourable apprehenfions and inclinations toward him, who recommendeth them to us, as endued with thofe attributes which fecure their credibility.

That God Almighty fhould erect this ftately fabric of heaven and earth, decked with fo rich and goodly furniture, with efpecial regard to man, fo puny and mean a creature, whom he forefaw fo ready to offend and wrong

him; that upon his foul misdemeanour God should not withdraw his gracious protection and care from him, but thence should take occasion of designing and capacitating him for a state far more happy than that whence he had lapsed, making his punishment a benefit, and his deserved death a gate of immortality; that for the redemption of him, continuing in apostasy and rebellious enmity, God should please to send down out of his bosom, from the height of glory and blessedness, his own dearest Son, to partake the basenes and infirmity of our flesh, to endure the inconveniences and troubles incident to our condition, to undergo a most painful and ignominious death for the expiation of our offences; these are mysteries, to which we should not easily give credence, did we not conceive God immensely good and gracious.

That God could not pitch on more compendious and commodious ways of expressing his goodness and mercy, we hardly should admit, if we did not take him to be transcendently wise, far beyond our reach and comprehension.

Eph. iii. 8. ἀνεξιχνίαστος πλοῦτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

That Jesus, a man in appearance like to ourselves; of mean parentage, of poor estate, who lived as a beggar and a vagrant, who died as a malefactor and a slave, in semblance forlorn to God and man, should be the Lord of life and glory, the general Author of salvation, the Judge of all men, the King of all the world, is a point which cannot but appear very strange, very scandalous to minds not imbued with special reverence of the divine power and wisdom.

That God, who is so perfectly holy, so exactly just, so extremely displeased with iniquity, should yet bear so patiently, and so easily pardon, enormous transgressions against himself; that he should accept so mean services, and to so slight performances should dispense so precious rewards, who would believe, that is not possessed with conceptions of his admirable clemency and bounty?

That God one day will raise the dead, re-collecting our scattered dust, and rearing our dissolved frame, we should not easily grant, had we not a strong opinion of God's

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That to deny ourselves in all ways, to *hate our own souls*, to take up a cross, to forsake kindred and friends, to quit houses and lands, *to renounce all that we have*, to reject the profits, the honours, the delights of the world, to cut off our right hands, to pluck out our right eyes, to mortify our members, and crucify our flesh, to be dead to the world, to expose our lives unto greatest dangers, yea to sacrifice them unto certain loss, are often things very good, most advisable and eligible, how could we be ever induced to conceive, if we did not take God to be most wise, who hath prescribed such duties; most faithful, who hath engaged to satisfy us for the discharge of them; most able fully to requite us for the pains and damages which we sustain in such practice?

That the methods of Providence should be so intricate and unaccountable; that the passage to happiness should be so rough, and that to misery so smooth; that He who disposeth all things, should to those whom he most liketh and loveth dispense temptations, crosses, disgraces, all kinds of hardship and sorrow; permitting those whom he disapproveth and detesteth to live without interruption in quiet, splendor, and jollity; would stumble one, who hath not entertained a general assurance concerning the wisdom and equity of God.

Faith, therefore, in most of its chief parts, doth imply him that owneth it to be well conceited and well affected toward his Maker; thereby avowing his most glorious perfections, the which do assure the truth of his word and doctrine; *He*, saith our Lord, *that hath received my testimony, hath set his seal, that God is true*; that is, most evidently he doth signify his opinion of God's veracity and fidelity, together with the divine perfections requisite to make them good; for be (saith the believer in his mind) the proposition never so uncouth to my apprehension, yet God is true who affirmeth it; be the duty never so harsh to my sense, yet God is wise and good who appointeth it; be the promise never so unlikely in appear-

John. iii. 3.

ance to find effect, yet God is faithful and able to perform it: and he that is thus disposed in judgment and affection toward God, no wonder if his demeanour be very acceptable to him.

Thus is faith precious, considering its nature, and those essential ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth include or imply. It will also appear to be so, if we consider its rise, and those good dispositions, which concur in its production.

III. 1. To the engendering of faith there is required a mind sober, composed, and wakeful; ready to observe what befalleth, apt to embrace what is offered, conducible to our good and advantage; a mind not so drowned in worldly care, sensual enjoyment, or impertinent sport, as to oversee or neglect the concerns of our better part, and eternal state. 1 Thess. v. 6.

That we may believe, we must have *eyes to see*, and *ears to hear*, and *a heart to understand*; we must attentively look with our eyes, we must *incline our ears to God's word*, we must *apply our heart to instruction*. . . . . Deut. xxix. 4. Matt. xiii. 9. xi. 15. Rev. ii. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 1.

Thus in the apostolical history we may observe, that when the Apostles, in a manner apt to stir any man, being awake, to remark, did propose their doctrine, some readily did yield their ears and hearts to their discourse; while others did not mind or regard it. Job xiii. 17. Isa. xxxii. 3. xxxv. 5. Prov. xxiii. 12. ii. 10. iv. 1, 20. vii. 24.

2. Faith doth require much diligence and industry. We must have the patience to give God the hearing, carefully attending to what is propounded; as it is said of Lydia, that she did *προσέχειν*, *attend to the words spoken by St. Paul*; and *δεῖ περισσοτέρως προσέχειν*, *we must*, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, *yield extraordinary attention to the things heard*; we must, as our Saviour warneth, let the evangelical *word sink down into our ears*: we must take the pains to consider the notions, and to weigh the reasons enforcing them; as the Bereans did, who did *ἀνακρίνειν τὰς γραφὰς*, *examine the Scriptures, whether those things were so*, as St. Paul did teach out of them. We must *ἐνδείκνυσθαι τὴν σπουδὴν*, *exert* and *demonstrate that studious care*, which is requisite to get a clear knowledge and firm 1 Tim. iv. 13. Acts xvi. 14. Heb. ii. 1. Luke ix. 44. Acts xvii. 11. Heb. vi. 11, 12. iv. 11. σπουδάσωμεν εἰσελθεῖν.

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perſuaſion concerning the points of belief; for *he that received the ſeed into the good ground*, was ὁ τὸν λόγον ἀκούων καὶ συνιὼν, *he that heard the word, and did underſtand it*, or well conſider it; God for this reaſon doth lay his truth not ſo open, or obvious, that we may be ſomewhat exerciſed, and put to uſe a pious diligence in finding it; it lieth under the ſurface, that we may delve for it; *ſearching the Scriptures*, weighing reaſons, comparing things.

Matt. xiii. 23.

John v. 39.

3. Faith muſt needs proceed from ſincerity, and ſoundneſs of judgment.

The aſſent, which upon contemplation and conſidering of things we do yield to them, is uſually termed judgment; and it much reſembleth that act, whoſe name it borroweth: for as he is a good judge, who after a full cognizance, and careful diſcuſſion of the caſe with its pleas, doth pronounce freely and fairly, being no way ſwayed either by his own inclination, or by temptation from without; who is not biaſſed by any previous affection or diſlike, not drawn by favour, not daunted by fear, not bribed by profit, not charmed by flattery, not dazzled by ſpecious appearance, not gulled by crafty inſinuations or by fine ſpeech, not tired by ſolicitation or importunity, not ſeduced by precedents or cuſtom; not perverted by any ſuch means, which are indirect, impertinent, or extrinſecal to the cauſe, ſo as to give a wrong ſentence; ſo is he that aſſenteth to Chriſtian truth: many conſiderations will exempt him from any ſuſpicion of being anywiſe ſo corrupted.

For the Goſpel cometh under trial in a guiſe nowiſe plauſible or advantageous to human conceit: its garb and circumſtances are nowiſe taking, or attractive of any favour to it; but ſuch rather, as are apt to raiſe diſlike and ſcandal againſt it; it being, as St. Paul ſaith, preſented up *in earthen veſſels*, in a way very homely and contemptible. It repreſenteth a mean, a poor, a perſecuted, a crucified man offering ſalvation, and claiming obedience; attended by perſons of like condition and fortune, urging the ſame overtures and pretences upon us: and what impreſſion is ſuch an appearance likely to work upon our

John vii. 24. μὴ κρίνετε κατ' ὄψιν.

2 Cor. iv. 7.

Gal. iv. 13.

1 Cor. ii. 3.

fancy, which is prone to affect ſplendid and pompous ſhews?

The ſame doth not preſent to us any bribe of gain, doth not tempt us with any hope of preferment, doth not allure us with any bait of pleaſure; but challengeth a free ſentence; and that ſuch an one, which may greatly prejudice our worldly intereſts, may ſpoil our profit, may ſtop our preferment, may daſh all our pleaſure; *In the world ye ſhall have tribulation: We muſt through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of God: Every one that will live godlily in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer perſecution: If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs, and follow me.* Such are the promiſes and enticements it uſeth.

John xvi. 33. xvii. 14. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 21. 2 Tim. iii. 12. 1 Theſſ. iii. 3. Phil. i. 29. Eph. iii. 13. Matt. xvi. 24. x. 38.

Neither doth it ſooth or court us by glozing ſpeech, ſo as to recommend itſelf to our fancies by raiſing in us a good conceit of ourſelves; but dealeth bluntly and coarſely with us; faithfully and plainly acquainting us with our own caſe, involved in its cauſe; how grievous ſinners we be, how obnoxious to juſtice we ſtand; how worthleſs we are, how wretched we ſhall be, ſecluding that mercy and grace of God, which it tendereth upon its own terms, of confeſſing our guilt, diſclaiming our merit, humbly ſeeking mercy, forſaking our own ways, and ſubmitting to God's will.

It doth not ſolicit us in trim language, nor by ſly inſinuations doth inveigle us to embrace it; but in downright terms, in a plain dreſs of ſpeech, in a reſolute ſtrain doth charge us, upon our peril, to do it right, denouncing upon our refuſal extremities of wrath and vengeance.

It advanceth pleas againſt the bent of our temper, which ever is prone to things forbidden, and averſe from things enjoined by it: againſt the prejudices of our mind, which is always apt to approve or to admire things which it condemneth or vilifieth; to diſlike or deſpiſe things which it commendeth and magnifieth: againſt the affections of our heart, the deareſt objects of whoſe love, delight, and care it would diſcard and drive from us; the moſt unwelcome and diſguſtful things whereto, it would

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introduce and bring to us: againſt our ſtrongeſt appetites, and moſt earneſt paſſions; the violent motions of which it doth curb and check; doth quell, or doth allay: againſt many temptations, potently drawing us to things from which it reclaimeth, ſtoutly driving us from things which it recommendeth: againſt the ſtream of habitual uſage, and the torrent of common example, things ſo prevalent upon us: in fine, againſt ourſelves, ſuch as we naturally are, ſuch as we by education and cuſtom are made; whom it impeacheth of heinous guilt and enormous folly; whoſe conceit and credit it debaſeth; whom it depreſſeth into the confines of hell and miſery: all within us, all about us, do with might and main oppoſe it; our luſt, our fancy, our honour, our intereſt, our reputation, our principles, our cuſtoms, our friends, our enemies; the fleſh, the world, the devil, all combinedly are ſo many fierce adverſaries, ſo many ſhrewd advocates, ſo many clamorous ſolicitors againſt its cauſe.

He therefore, who notwithſtanding all theſe diſadvantages determineth in favour of it, muſt aſſuredly be a very upright, impartial, and incorrupt judge; declaring his ſenſe purely according to the dictates of his reaſon and conſcience.

What indeed greater integrity can a man expreſs, than in thus deciding a cauſe referred to him ſo much againſt himſelf, as he is naturally affected, and ſtandeth related to things here? What greater equity can he ſhew, than in avowing ſo harſh, ſo rough, ſo unpleaſing truths, ſo little gratifying his own ſenſe or fancy, ſo little favouring his profit or pleaſure? What greater ingenuity can there be, than to eſpouſe that doctrine which pincheth our liberty within ſo narrow bounds; which layeth ſuch reſtraints upon our thoughts, our words, our actions; which interdicteth to us ſo many enjoyments, which exacteth from us ſo great pains?

4. To the begetting faith there muſt concur humility, or a readineſs to entertain ſober and moderate opinions of ourſelves, together with ſuitable affections and deſires; for he that with hearty perſuaſion and ſerious reſolution em-

braceth Chriſtianity, doth thereby ſtoop to many things very croſs to the vain conceit, the proud humour, and haughty ſtomach of man. SERM. II.

The firſt ſtep into the Chriſtian ſtate is a ſight and ſenſe of our own imperfection, weakneſs, baſeneſs, and miſery: we muſt diſcern and feel, that our mind is very blind, and our reaſon very feeble; that our will is very impotent, lame, depraved, prone to evil, and averſe from good; that 2 Cor. iii. 5. our life is void of merit, and polluted with guilt; that our condition is deplorably ſad and wretched; that of ourſelves we are inſufficient to think or do any good, in order to our recovery or deliverance; whence we are obliged to ſore compunction of ſpirit for our deeds and our caſe, to humble confeſſion of our ſins and miſeries, to earneſt ſupplication for mercy and grace, to heal and reſcue us from our ſad eſtate: *Lord have mercy on me, a ſinner: What ſhall I do to be ſaved? Wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* Such are the ejaculations of a ſoul teeming with faith. Luke xviii. 13. Acts xvi. 30. Rom. vii. 24.

He that entereth into the faith, muſt therewith entirely ſubmit his underſtanding, and reſign his judgment to God, as his maſter and guide; being ready to believe whatever God declareth, however to his ſeeming unintelligible or incredible; to follow whither God conducteth, although like Abraham he *knoweth not whither he goeth;* to approve that which God ordaineth, however diſtaſteful to his ſenſe; to undertake that which God requireth, however difficult; to bear that which God impoſeth, how burdenſome ſoever; being content that Divine wiſdom ſhall abſolutely ſway and reign over his wiſdom; that his reaſon ſhall be puzzled, ſhall be baffled in many caſes; that his mind ſhall be rifled of all its prejudices, its fond curioſities, its preſumptuous confidences, of *every thought and device* advancing itſelf againſt divine truth. Naz. Or. xxvi. p. 454. Heb. xi. 8. Οὐκ ἐπιστάμενός που ἔρχεται. 2 Cor. x. 5.

He muſt abandon all good opinion of himſelf, all conceitedneſs of his own worth, merit, excellency, felicity in any kind; ſlighting his wealth, his power, his dignity, his wit, his wiſdom, and the like advantages natural or ſecular, which are ſo much prized in vulgar and worldly

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esteem; as things in themselves of no consideration, not otherwise valuable than as talents entrusted by God, or instruments of his service; disowning them from himself, as things freely dispensed by God, and absolutely depending on his disposal: saying with St. Paul, *Yea doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.*

Phil. iii. 8, 9.

He also that cordially doth embrace the Christian doctrine, with resolution of conforming his practice thereto, must look for it to sustain much disgrace; to be hated, to be censured and taxed, to be slighted and scorned, to be reproached, to be spurned as a fool, an idiot, a humourist, a silly, superstitious, fantastical, morose body, by the world, and the adherents to its corrupt principles, its vicious fashions, its depraved sentiments and practices; *who will wonder* (with indignation and scorn) *at those who do not run into the same excess of riot, speaking evil* and railing *at them:* especially in times when wickedness *doth lift up its horn,* when profaneness doth not only much prevail, but doth insult and vapour over piety.

John xv. 18, 19.

1 Pet. iv. 4. βλασφημοῦντες.

Every Christian as such immediately doth admit notions quite debasing high conceit, which ascribe all our good things purely to Divine bounty, which allow us to own nothing but evils springing from our defects, infirmities, and corruptions, from our guilty naughtiness and folly; which display our great imperfection, indigency, impotency, ignorance, error, unworthiness, and forlorn wretchedness; which assure that we do subsist in total dependance upon God, continually needing his protection, succour, and mercy.

He must undertake the practice of duties extremely cross to proud humour; to comport with injuries and affronts, without revenge, without resentment of them; to place himself beneath others; to be content with his state, how mean and poor soever; to bear patiently all events

incident to him, however ſad and grievous; with the like, contrary to the guſt of a proud heart. SERM. II.

He that doth thus demean himſelf, embracing ſuch notions, and complying with ſuch duties, how can he otherwiſe than be a very humble, ſober, and modeſt perſon?

5. To faith much fortitude, much reſolution, and courage muſt conſpire: for he that firmly perſuadeth himſelf to be a Chriſtian, doth embark in a moſt difficult and dreadful warfare, doth undertake moſt high and hazardous enterpriſes, doth engage in the boldeſt adventures that a man can ſet upon; he intendeth to encounter moſt puiſſant, ſtout, and fierce enemies; to fight many a bloody battle; to attack many a ſtrong hold, to ſuſtain many a ſharp brunt, to endure many ſore hardſhips, to run into many terrible dangers, to break through many tough difficulties, to ſurmount many great diſcouragements, impediments, and oppoſitions.

He doth ſet himſelf in array againſt the world, the fleſh, and the devil, that ſtrong confederacy bandied againſt him with their utmoſt force of ſtrength and ſubtilty. 1 John v. 4.

He muſt combat the world, by its fair looks, flatteries, and careſſes, enticing to ſin; by its frowns, menaces, and rough treatments, deterring from duty; enſnaring us by its profits, its glories, its pleaſures; ſeducing us by its bad cuſtoms and examples; diſtracting us with its cares and amuſements of buſineſs. Eph. ii. 2. iv. 22. Rom. xii. 2. 1 Cor. vii. 31. 2 Pet. i. 4.

He muſt cope with the fleſh, that inteſtine and treacherous foe; which with its corrupt prejudices and imaginations, with its ſtubborn proclivities, with its impetuous appetites, with its boiſterous paſſions, doth *war againſt our ſoul, ſtriving to bring our minds into captivity under the law of ſin, which is in our members.* 1 Pet. ii. 11. Rom. vii. 23.

He muſt *grapple with* the devil, that *ſtrong one*, that *greedy lion*, that *wily ſnake*, that rueful *dragon*, always waiting to ſurpriſe us, always gaping to devour us, always laying cloſe trains to entrap us, always throwing *fiery* darts of temptation, to conſume or ſcorch us; *Our wreſtling*, as the Apoſtle doth expreſs it, *is againſt princi-* Eph. vi. 12. 1 Pet. v. 8, 9. Eph. vi. 11. iv. 12. 2 Cor. ii 11. Eph. vi. 12.

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In these conflicts he must expect to meet with many a grievous repulse, to bear many a hard knock, to feel many a sore wound; to be often beat back, often knocked down, often thrust through, often trampled on, and insulted over.

To set on these things is surely the highest gallantry that can be; he that hath the heart to attempt and undergo such things, is a daring and brave man indeed; he that successfully can achieve such exploits is truly a hero; most deserving notable trophies, and everlasting monuments of renown.

The undertakings of Alexander, of Hannibal, of Cæsar, did not signify valour like to this; their achievements were but toys in comparison to these: those famous gallants would have found it infinitely harder to conquer the world in this way; to have subdued their lusts, and mastered their passions, would have proved far more difficult, than to get advantage in scuffles with armed men; to discomfit legions of devils, would have been to them another kind of work, than was the vanquishing squadrons of Persians, of Gauls, of Romans: to have set upon their own ambition and vanity, their intemperance, their revenge; to have quelled those inward enemies; to have sustained affronts, disgraces, afflictions, with a calm and contented mind, would have more tried their courage, than all which they attempted; making a great shew, but signifying little of true fortitude.

6. The noble virtue of patience is likewise accessary to faith; thereto all kinds of patience must concur; patience of labour in God's service, and obedience to all his com-
1 Thess. i. 3. mands; *patience of hope*, in waiting for the accomplishment of God's pleasure; patience of persecution for God's sake, and in conscience of our duty to him; patience of crosses and afflictions by God's disposal allotted to us for our instruction, our exercise, our probation, our correction, and improvement in goodness. For,

Heb. v. 8. Christianity is the great school and special academy of

patience, wherein we are informed, are inured, are trained up and tried to bear all things: the crofs is the badge of our profeffion, without willingly carrying which, we cannot be the children of God or difciples of Chrift; whereby we are *conformed to the image of our Lord*, the *man of forrow, and acquainted with grief*: tribulation is our lot, *to which we are appointed*, and to which *we are called*; perfecution is the condition propofed to us; it being told us, that *every one who will live godlily in Chrift Jefus muft fuffer perfecution*: affliction is the way toward happinefs, *for by many afflictions we muft enter into the kingdom of heaven*; it is reprefented as a favour granted to us to fuffer; for ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, *to you*, faith St. Paul, *it hath been indulged, not only to believe in Chrift, but to fuffer for him*; it is *our glory*, our joy, our beatitude. Our work is *to run with patience the race that is fet before us*: in fine, faith and patience are the pair, which being coupled together draw us to the *inheritance of the promifes*; patience being *needful* to introduce and fupport faith.

Heb. xii. 6. Matt. xvi. 24. Rom. viii. 29. Ifa. liii. 3. 1 Theff. iii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 21. 1 Tim. iii. 12. Acts xiv. 22. Phil. i. 29. Eph. iii. 13. Matt. v. 11. James i. 2. Rom. v. 3. James i. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 14. iii. 14. Heb. xii. 1. vi. 12. Rev. xiii. 10. Heb. x. 36. Luke xxi. 19.

7. With faith alfo muft concur the virtue of prudence, in all its parts and inftances: therein is exerted a fagacity, difcerning things as they really are in themfelves, not as they appear through the mafks and difguifes of fallacious femblance, whereby they would delude us; not fuffering us to be abufed by the gaudy fhews, the falfe glofffes, the tempting allurements of things; therein we muft ufe difcretion in prizing things rightly, according to their true nature and intrinfic worth; in choofing things really good, and rejecting things truly evil, however each kind may feem to our erroneous fenfe; therein we muft have a good profpect, extending itfelf to the final confequences of things, fo that looking over prefent contingencies we defcry what certainly will befall us through the courfe of eternal ages.

In faith is exercifed that prudence, which guideth and prompteth us to walk by the beft rules, to act in the beft manner, to apply the beft means toward attainment of the beft ends.

The prudence of faith is indeed the only prudence con-

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ſiderable; all other prudence regarding objects very low and ignoble, tending to deſigns very mean or baſe, having fruits very poor or vain. To be wiſe about affairs of this life (theſe fleeting, theſe empty, theſe deceitful ſhadows) is a ſorry wiſdom; to be wiſe in *purveying for the fleſh*, is the wiſdom of a beaſt, which is wiſe enough to prog for its ſuſtenance; to be wiſe in gratifying fancy, is the wiſdom of a child, who can eaſily entertain and pleaſe himſelf with trifles; to be wiſe in contriving miſchief, or embroiling things, is the wiſdom of a fiend, in which the old ſerpent, or grand politician of hell, doth exceed all the Machiavels in the world: this, as St. James ſaith, is *earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh wiſdom*; but the wiſdom of faith, or that *wiſdom which is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, eaſy to be entreated, full of mercy and good works.*

Rom. xiii. 14.

Jam. iii. 15, 17.

8. In fine, the embracing Chriſtian doctrine doth ſuppoſe a mind imbued with all kinds of virtuous diſpoſition in ſome good degree; for ſeeing that doctrine doth highly commend, and ſtrictly preſcribe all virtue, he muſt needs be a friend to all virtue, and a devoted ſervant thereto, who can heartily approve and like it: his eye muſt be ſound, and clear from miſts of bad prejudice, who can ken the beauty, and bear the luſtre of it; his palate muſt be pure from vicious tinctures, who can reliſh its ſweetneſs; his heart muſt be void of corrupt affections and deſires, who ſincerely doth affect it, and firmly doth cleave thereto; his conſcience muſt be good, who can hope for the excellent rewards which it propoſeth, who can ſtand proof againſt the terrible menaces it denounceth; his intentions muſt be upright, who dareth offer them to be ſcanned by ſo exact rules; his life muſt in good meaſure be blameleſs, who can preſent it before the bar of ſo rigorous judgment; he muſt be a man of much goodneſs, ingenuity, and integrity, who can think it expedient, who can be content and willing that ſuch a doctrine be accounted true, which ſo plainly diſcountenanceth, which ſo peremptorily condemneth, which ſo ſeverely puniſheth all kinds of wickedneſs; for *He*, as our Saviour ſaith, and he alone, *who*

Chryſ. in 1 Cor. Or. 3.

John iii. 21.

doeth the truth, doth come to the light, that his deeds may be manifested. Faith therefore, *and good conscience,* are well by St. Paul so often coupled, as inseparable associates.

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1 Tim. i. 5. i. 19. iii. 9.

Where now are they, who wonder that faith is so commended, doth find such acceptance with God, and is so crowned with reward; who would banish it from the company of virtues, and out of all moral consideration; who would have it taken for an involuntary act, forced on the mind, and issuing from dry speculation? for, seeing so many excellent dispositions of soul are its ingredients, essentially connected with it; seeing so many noble acts of will do concur to its production; seeing it hath so many choice virtues inseparably adherent, as previous or concomitant to it; it is no wonder that they should moralize it, should render it very considerable, so capable of praise, so worthy of recompense.

If we therefore do believe, because we will apply our minds to regard our best concerns, because we will yield due attention to the declarations and overtures of God, because we will take the pains to weigh the reasons persuasive of truth, because we look on things with an indifferent eye, and judge uprightly about them, because we have the courage, the patience, the prudence, the innocence, requisite for avowing such truths; then surely faith is voluntary, and therefore very commendable.

Whoever indeed will consider the nature of man, or will consult obvious experience, shall find, that in all practical matters, our will, or appetite, hath a mighty influence upon our judgment of things; causing men with great attention to regard that which they affect, and carefully to mark all reasons making for it; but averting from that which they dislike, and making them to overlook the arguments which persuade it; whence men generally do suit their opinions to their inclinations; warping to that side where their interest doth lie, or to which their complexion, their humour, their passions, their pleasure, their ease doth sway them; so that almost any notion will seem true, which is profitable, which is safe, which is pleasant,

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or anywiſe grateful to them; that notion falſe, which in any ſuch reſpect doth croſs them: very few can abſtract their minds from ſuch conſiderations, or embrace pure truth, diveſted of them; and thoſe few, who do ſo, muſt therein moſt employ their will, by ſtrong efforts of voluntary reſolution and patience diſengaging their minds from thoſe clogs and biaſſes. This is particularly notorious in men's adherence to parties, divided in opinion, which is ſo regulated by that ſort of cauſes, that if you do mark what any man's temper is, and where his intereſt lieth, you may eaſily prognoſticate on what ſide he will be, and with what degree of ſerioufneſs, of vigour, of zeal he will cleave thereto: a timorous man you may be almoſt ſure will be on the ſafer ſide; a covetous man will bend to that party, where gain is to be had; an ambitious man will cloſe with the opinion paſſing in court; a careleſs man will comply with the faſhion; affection ariſing from education or prejudice will hold others ſtiff; few do follow the reſults of impartial contemplation.

—facile quæ credita proſunt Credimus.

All faith therefore, even in common things, may be deemed voluntary, no leſs than intellectual; and Chriſtian faith is eſpecially ſuch, as requiring thereto more application of ſoul, managed by choice, than any other; whence the ancients, in their deſcription of it, do uſually include this condition, ſuppoſing it not to be a bare aſſent of the underſtanding, but a free conſent of the will: [n] *Faith*, ſaith Clemens Alexandrinus, *is a ſpontaneous acceptance, and compliance with divine religion*; and, *To be made at firſt was not in our power; but God perſuadeth us to follow thoſe things, which he liketh, choofing by the rational faculties, which he hath given us, and ſo leadeth us to faith*; ſaith Juſtin the Martyr.

The ſame is ſuppoſed in holy Scripture; where of be-

[n] Πίστις προλήψις ἑκούσιός ἐστι, θεοσεβείας συγκατάθεσις, &c. *Clem. Strom.* ii. p. 265.

Ἑθελοντὴν συνίστασθαι τῷ συμφέροντι συνίσεως ἀρχή. *Ibid.*

Τὸ μὲν ἀρχὴν γενέσθαι οὐχ ἡμέτερον ἦν. τὸ δὲ ἐξαπολυθῆναι εἰς φίλον αὐτῷ αἱρουμένους δι' ὧν αὐτὸς ἐδωρήσατο λογικῶν δυνάμεων, πείθει τε καὶ εἰς πίστιν ἄγει ἡμᾶς. *Just. Mart. Apol.* ii. (p. 58.)

lievers it is ſaid, that they did ἀσμένως, *gladly*, or willingly *receive the word*, and they received it μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, *with all* willingneſs, or *readineſs of mind*. Acts ii. 41. xvii. 11.

And to defect of will infidelity is often aſcribed: *Ye will not come unto me*, ſaith our Saviour, *that ye might have life*; and, *How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!* and, *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his ſon, and ſent forth his ſervants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come*: and, *Of this*, ſaith St. Peter of ſome profane infidels, *they are willingly ignorant, that by the word of God the heavens were of old*: and of the like St. Paul ſaith, *That they received not the love of the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs*. John v. 40. Luke xiii. 34. Matt. xxii. 3. 2 Pet. iii. 5. 2 Theſſ. ii. 10, 12.

Indeed to prevent this exception, that faith is a forced act, and therefore not moral; or to render it more voluntary and worthy, God hath not done all that he might have done to convince men, or to wring belief from them: he hath not ſtamped on his truth that glaring evidence, which might dazzle our minds; he doth not propoſe it armed with irreſiſtible cogency; he hath not made the objects of faith conſpicuous to ſenſe, nor the propoſitions thereof demonſtrable by reaſon, like theorems of geometry: this indeed would be to depoſe faith, to diveſt it of its excellency, and bereave it of its praiſe; this were to deprive us of that *bleſſedneſs*, which is adjudged to thoſe, who *believe and do not ſee*; this would proſtitute wiſdom to be defloured by the fooliſh, and expoſe truth to be rifled by the profane; this would take from our reaſon its nobleſt exerciſe, and faireſt occaſion of improvement; this would confound perſons fit to be diſtinguiſhed, the ſagacious and the ſtupid, the diligent and the ſlothful, the ingenuous and the froward, the ſober and the vain, the pious and the profane; *the children of wiſdom*, which are apt to *juſtify it*, and the ſons of folly, who *hate knowledge*; the friends of truth and virtue, and the lovers of falſehood and unrighteouſneſs. Ἄπιστος, ὁ φίλον ψεύδος ἀκόρεστον. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* (p. 268.) *et Plat.* (p. 841.) John xx. 29. Matt. xi. 19. Prov. i. 29. v. 12. 2 Theſſ. ii. 10, 11, 12.

God therefore hath exhibited his truth, ſhining through

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some mists of difficulty and doubt, that only those who have clear eyes, who do look attentively, who are willing to see, may discern it; that those who have eyes may see, and *those who have ears may hear*. He meaneth this way of discovering his mind for a test to prove our ingenuity, for a field to exercise our industry, for an occasion to express his goodness in crowning the wisdom and virtue of good believers; that *the trial of your faith*, saith St. Peter, *being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*. He meaneth also thence to display his justice in punishing the slothful, the vain, the perverse, the profane; that, as the Apostle saith, *all men might be judged, who believed not the truth—but had pleasure in unrighteousness*: hence, *There must of necessity be scandals*, said our Saviour; hence our Lord was *set for a mark to be contradicted, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed*; and, *There must be heresies*, saith St. Paul; why? that *they which are approved* (οἱ δόκιμοι, persons that can bear the test) *may be manifested*.

Matt. xi. 15. xiii. 9. Matt. xiii. 11. Quin Hieron. Chrys. in Jeh. Or. 5. 1 Pet. i. 7, 8. James i. 3. 2 Thess. ii. 12. Matt. xviii. 7. Luke xvii. 1. ii. 35. 1 Cor. xi. 19. (1 John ii. 19.)

God dealeth with us as he did with his ancient people. He, to assure them of his gracious protection and providence over them, or to persuade them of the truth of what he by Moses taught them, did before their eyes perform stupendous works in their behalf, affording them miraculous deliverances from their enemies, and prodigious supplies of their needs; the sight of which did extort a temporary belief; *Then*, it is said, *they believed his words, and sang his praise*; and, When *Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses*. Yet withal God suffered divers things to fall out, *to humble them*, as it is said, *and to prove them, and to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep his commandments, or no*: the result of which dispensations was, that they being inconsiderate, impatient, and

Ps. lxxviii. cv. cvi. Ps. cvi. 12. Exod. xiv. 31. Deut. iv. 32. viii. 2. vii. 19.

fractory, *believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation; they despised that pleasant land, and gave no credence to his word:* so God dealt with that typical people; and in like manner doth he proceed with us: he hath ministered signal attestations to the Gospel; he hath dispensed arguments abundantly sufficient to convince well disposed minds of its truth; but he hath not cleared it from all scruples, which may disturb the froward or the delicate; he hath not exempted it from all scandals, which may disgust the perverse and stubborn; he hath not prevented all exceptions or cavils devisable by curious or captious wits against it; he hath not guarded it wholly from the malicious opposition of those, whose interest it might seem, in favour of their vices and follies, to impugn it: just it was, that to such the Gospel should be *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; who stumble at the word, being disobedient, unto which they were appointed,* (that is, God having so purposely ordered the evangelical dispensation, that such persons should not approve it, or comply with it;) just it was, that they should be debarred from a knowledge of that truth, which they should abuse, and *detain in unrighteousness;* just it was, that they should be punished with such temptations unto doubt and error, *who would not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

Ps. lxxviii. 22, 32, 56. &c. Ps. cvi. 24. Neh. ix. 16. Deut. i. 32. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8. Rom. i. 18, 28. 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11, 12.

Indeed, more abundant light of conviction, as it would deprive good men of much praise and reward, so it might be hurtful to many persons; who having affections indisposed to comply with truth, would outface and outbrave it, however clear and evident; *they would,* as Job speaketh, *rebel against the light,* although shining on them with a meridian splendor; they would plunge themselves into an inexcusable and incorrigible state of impiety, *doing despite to the Spirit of grace,* and involving themselves in the *unpardonable sin;* as we have many instances in the evangelical history of those, who beholding unquestionable evidences of divine power attesting to our Lord's doctrine, which they could not but acknowledge, did yet oppose it, did blaspheme against it, did outrageously persecute it.

Job. xxiv. 14. Heb. x. 29. Matt. xii. 31, 45. ix. 34. xii. 24. Luke xiii. 17. John xi. 47. xii. 37. ix. 28. Acts iv. 16.

Should God, as he once did in a dreadful manner,

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thunder out his laws, and *ſhake the earth with his voice,* yet many would little regard them; ſhould God, in confirmation of his will, perform every day as many miracles, as he did once in Egypt, yet there would be Pharaohs, *hardening their hearts* againſt it; ſhould God himſelf deſcend from heaven, as once he did, and converſe with us, inſtructing us by diſcourſe and practice, diſplaying among us conſpicuous evidences of his power and goodneſs, yet *who would believe his report, to whom would the arm of the Lord be revealed?* how few cordially would embrace his doctrine, or ſubmit to his law! As it was then, ſo it would be now; he would be hated, be ſcorned, be affronted, and abuſed, by perſons qualified with like affections, as thoſe were, who ſo then did ſerve him; for in all times like perſons will do like things: as then only *his ſheep* (that is, well diſpoſed perſons, like ſheep, ſimple, harmleſs, and ductile) *did hear his voice, and follow him;* ſo others *would not believe him, becauſe they were not of his ſheep,* being imbued with ſwiniſh, curriſh, wolviſh diſpoſitions, incapacitating them to follow his conduct: there would be perſons like to thoſe, of whom it is ſaid, *Behold, ye ſcorners, and wonder, and periſh: for I work a work in your days, a work which you ſhall no wiſe believe, though a man declare it unto you.*

Heb. xii. 16, 26.

John xii. 38. Rom. x. 16.

John x. 27.

John x. 26.

Acts xiii. 41.

(It is with inſtituted religion as it is with natural; the works of nature are ſo many continual miracles of divine power and wiſdom; in the common track of Providence many wonderful things do occur; yet who by them is moved to acknowledge and adore God? notwithſtanding them, how many Atheiſts and Epicureans are there! So will it be in regard to divine revelations, which however clearly atteſted, will yet be queſtioned.)

[o] Thoſe indeed whom ſufficient reaſons (ſuch as God hath diſpenſed to us) will not convince, upon them the greateſt motives would have ſmall efficacy; ſo father Abraham told the rich man; *If they hear not Moſes and the pro-*

Luke xvi. 31. (John. v. 47.)

[o] Γνώμης χρείαν ἔχουσιν· κἂν μὴ αὐτὴν παρῇ, σημεῖον ὅλον ἔφυγον. *Chryſ. in Matt. Or.* 43.

phets, neither will they be perſuaded, though one roſe from the dead. SERM. II.

They may pretend, if they had more light, they would be perſuaded; like thoſe who ſaid, *Let him now come down from the croſs, and we will believe;* but it would not in effect prove ſo, for they would yet be deviſing ſhifts, and forging exceptions; or, however, they would oppoſe an impudent face, and an obſtinate will againſt the truth. Matt. xxvii. 42.

Wherefore it was for the common good, and to Divine wiſdom it appeared ſufficient, that upon the balance truth ſhould much outweigh falſehood, if the ſcales were held in an even hand, and no prejudices were thrown in againſt it; that it ſhould be conſpicuous enough to eyes, which do not avert themſelves from it, *or wink* on purpoſe, or be clouded with luſt and paſſion; it was enough that infidelity is juſtly chargeable on men's wilful pravity; and that πρόφασιν ἐκ ἔχουσι, *they have not*, as our Saviour ſaith, *any reaſonable excuſe* for it. Acts xxviii. 27. John xv. 22.

But ſo much for the cauſes and adjuncts of faith; the effects and conſequences of it I reſerve for another occaſion.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON III.

OF THE VIRTUE AND REASONABLENESS OF FAITH.

2 Pet. i. 1.

——to them that have obtained like precious faith with us.

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But that faith worthily deſerveth the praiſes and privileges aſſigned thereto, we may be ſatisfied, if we do well conſider its nature and ingredients, its cauſes and riſe, its effects and conſequences.

In its nature it doth involve knowledge, or the poſſeſſion of truth, which is the natural food, the proper wealth, the ſpecial ornament of our ſoul; knowledge of truths moſt worthy of us, and important to us, as converſing about the higheſt objects, and conducing to the nobleſt uſe; knowledge peculiar and not otherwiſe attainable, as

lying without the ſphere of our ſenſe, and beyond the reach of our reaſon; knowledge conveyed to us with great evidence and aſſurance; the greateſt indeed that well can be, conſidering the nature of its objects, and the general capacities of men, and the moſt proper way of working upon reaſonable natures.

It implieth (that which giveth to every virtue its form and worth) a good uſe of our reaſon, in carefully weighing and uprightly judging about things of greateſt concernment to us; it implieth a cloſing with God's providence diſpenſing opportunities, and repreſenting motives ſerving to beget it; a compliance with God's grace attracting and inclining our ſouls to embrace his heavenly truth: it implieth alſo good opinions of God, and good affections toward him, which are requiſite to the believing (upon his teſtimony, promiſe, or command) points very ſublime, very difficult, very croſs to our fancy and humour.

The cauſes alſo, which concur in its production, are very excellent; many virtuous diſpoſitions of ſoul are requiſite to the conception and birth of it: there muſt be a ſober, compoſed, and wakeful mind, inquiſitive after truth, apt to obſerve it ſtarting, and ready to lay hold on it: there muſt be diligence and induſtry in attending to the propoſals, and conſidering the enforcements of it: there muſt be ſincerity and ſoundneſs of judgment, in avowing its cauſe, againſt the exceptions raiſed againſt it by prejudice and carnal conceit, by ſenſual appetites and paſſions, by temptation and worldly intereſt: there muſt be great humility, diſpoſing us to a ſubmiſſion of our underſtanding, and a reſignation of our will unto God, in admitting notions which debaſe haughty conceit, in eſpouſing duties which repreſs ſturdy humour: there muſt be much reſolution and courage, in undertaking things very difficult, hazardous, and painful; much patience, in adhering to a profeſſion, which exacteth ſo much pain, and expoſeth to ſo much trouble: there muſt be great prudence, in applying our choice (among ſo many competitions and pretences claiming it) to that which is only good; in ſeeing

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through fallacious diſguiſes, and looking over preſent appearances, ſo as to deſcry the juſt worth, and the final conſequence of things: there muſt, in fine, be a love of truth, and a liking of all virtue, which is ſo highly commended, and ſo ſtrictly preſcribed by the Chriſtian doctrine.

Theſe particulars, commending faith to us, I have already largely proſecuted; I ſhall only therefore now inſiſt upon the laſt head, concerning its effects, whereby (as the goodneſs of a tree is known by its fruits) the great excellency thereof will appear.

Its effects are of two ſorts; one ſpringing naturally from it, the other following it in way of recompenſe from Divine bounty: I ſhall only touch the firſt ſort; becauſe in this its virtue is moſt ſeen, as in the other its felicity.

Faith is naturally efficacious in producing many rare fruits; naturally, I ſay, not meaning to exclude ſupernatural grace, but ſuppoſing faith to be a fit inſtrument thereof; for *God worketh in us to will, and to do*, but in a way ſuitable to our nature, employing ſuch means as properly ſerve to incline and excite us unto good practices; and ſuch is faith, ſupported and wielded by his grace; for indeed (Acts xi. 26.)

Even in common life faith is the compaſs by which men ſteer their practice, and the main ſpring of action, ſetting all the wheels of our activity on going; every man acteth with ſerious intention, and with vigour anſwerable to his perſuaſion of things, that they are worthy his pains, and attainable by his endeavours. What moveth the huſbandman to employ ſo much care, toil, and expence in manuring his ground, in plowing, in ſowing, in weeding, in fencing it, but a perſuaſion that he ſhall reap a crop, which in benefit will anſwer all? What ſtirreth up the merchant to undertake tedious voyages over vaſt and dangerous ſeas, adventuring his ſtock, abandoning his eaſe, expoſing his life to the waves, to rocks and ſhelves, to ſtorms and hurricanes, to cruel pirates, to ſweltry heats and piercing colds, but a perſuaſion, that wealth is a very

[illegible]

[illegible] *potently* [illegible] *apprehending* [illegible] *the great light* [illegible] *happen* [illegible] *and patience* [illegible] *do holy desire*, [illegible] *but a faith* [illegible] *well*? [illegible] *offending*, [illegible] *and fad miſchiefs thence*?

In reaſon a ſtrong and ſteady belief but of one point or two, would ſuffice to engage us upon all duty, and to withdraw us from all ſin. Did we only believe the future judgment, with the reſults of it, that alone would be an effectual both ſpur and curb to us: for who believing that his ſoul then ſhall be laid bare, that his inmoſt thoughts and ſecreteſt purpoſes ſhall be diſcloſed unto the view of all the world, will preſume to harbour in his breaſt any foul thought or baſe deſign? who believing that he ſhall then be obliged to render an account of *every idle word*, will dare to utter villanous blaſphemies, wicked curſes, fond oaths, profane jeſts, vile ſlanders or detractions, harſh cenſures, or bitter reproaches? who being perſuaded

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that a rigorous amends will then be exacted from him for any wrong he doeth, will not be afraid with violence to oppreſs, or with fraud to circumvent his neighbour? who deeming himſelf accountable then for every talent and opportunity, will find in his heart to ſquander away or miſemploy his time, his power, his wealth, his credit, his wit, his knowledge, his advantages in any kind of doing God ſervice? who knowing himſelf obnoxious to a ſudden trial, whereat his eſtate, his reputation, his life, all his intereſt and welfare muſt lie at ſtake, will contentedly loſe his mind in wanton ſports or wild frolics? In fine, if we are really perſuaded, that preſently after this ſhort and tranſitory life, we ſhall openly, in the face of God, angels, and men, be arraigned at an impartial bar, where all our thoughts, our words, our actions ſhall moſt exactly be ſifted and ſcanned; according to which cognizance a juſt doom ſhall be pronounced, and certainly executed upon us; how muſt this needs engage us to be very ſober and ſerious, very circumſpect and vigilant over our mind, our tongue, our dealings, our converſation, our whole life!

Again, If a man firmly believeth, that by a pious courſe of life, he ſhall gain the preſent favour and friendſhip of the Almighty, with all the real goods whereof he is capable; and that hereafter he ſhall be rewarded for it with an eternal life in perfect reſt, in glory, in joy, in beatitude unſpeakable; that he ſhall obtain *an incorruptible inheritance, a treaſure that can never fail, a crown that will not fade, a kingdom that cannot be ſhaken;* wherein he ſhall enjoy the bliſsful viſion of God, ſmiling in love upon him; the preſence of his gracious Redeemer, embracing him with dear affection; the moſt delightful ſociety of bleſſed angels, and *juſt ſpirits made perfect;* a ſtate of felicity, ſurpaſſing all words to expreſs it, all thoughts to conceive it; of which the brighteſt ſplendors, and the choiceſt pleaſures here can yield but a faint reſemblance; how can he forbear earneſtly to embrace and purſue ſuch a courſe of practice! what zeal muſt ſuch a perſuaſion inſpire; what vigour muſt it rouſe within him! who upon

1 Pet. i. 4. Luke xii. 33.
1 Pet. v. 4. Heb. xii. 28.
1 Cor. ii. 9.

any terms would forfeit the hopes of ſuch a happineſs? who would not be glad to undertake any pains, or endure any hardſhips for it?

And who likewiſe heartily is perſuaded, that by vicious converſation he ſhall incur the wrath of Almighty God, and ſtand obnoxious to the ſtrokes of his ſevere juſtice; that perſiſting therein he infallibly muſt drop into the bottomleſs pit, into that utter darkneſs, that furnace of fire unquenchable, that lake of flaming brimſtone; where is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, where the immortal worm ſhall gnaw on his heart, and he muſt feel the pangs of a never-dying death; that ſtate of moſt bitter remorſe, of moſt horrid deſpair, of moſt forlorn diſconſolateneſs, of continual and endleſs torment; wherein he ſhall be baniſhed from the face of God, and by immutable deſtiny barred from all light, all eaſe, all ſolace; from any glimpſe of hope, from any reſpite of pain; the wretchedneſs of which condition not the ſharpeſt pain of body, not the foreſt anguiſh of mind, not the ſaddeſt diſtreſs here can anywiſe reach or repreſent; whoever, I ſay, is poſſeſſed with a belief of theſe things conſequent on a wicked life, will he not thence be effectually ſcared from it? what bait of temptation ſhall allure him, what force ſhall drive him thereto? will he for a flaſh of pleaſure, for a puff of fame, for a lump of pelf; will he in compliment or complaiſance to others, in apiſh imitation or compliance with a faſhion, out of mere wantonneſs, or in regard to ſome petty intereſt; will he in hope of any worldly good, or fear of any inconvenience here, ſuffer himſelf to be caſt into that diſmal ſtate? will he not ſooner go and ſhake a lion by the paw, ſooner provoke an adder to bite him, ſooner throw himſelf down a precipice, or leap into a caldron of burning pitch? Certainly in reaſon to believe ſuch things, and to ſin, can hardly be conſiſtent.

Matt. xviii. 30. Jude 6. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Luke iv. 31. Rev. xx. 3. Matt. viii. 12. xiii. 42, 50. Mark ix. 43, 45. (Iſa. xxxiii. 14.) Rev. xx. 21. Matt. ix. 44. Rev. xx. 10. Dan. xii. 2. Everlaſting ſhame. 2 Theſſ. i. 9. Rom. ii. 9. στενοχωρία.

Such a general influence is faith, looking with a provident eye upon future rewards and conſequences of things, apt to have upon our practice: the which collaterally taking in the glorious attributes of God, the gracious performances of our Saviour, the beauty and ſweetneſs of

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each divine precept, the manifold obligations and encouragements to duty, the whole latitude and harmony of evangelical truth, all tending to the recommendation of holineſs, what efficacy muſt it needs have! how powerfully muſt it incite us to good practice!

ἁγνίζω ψυχὰς. 1 Pet. i. 22. καθαρίζω καρδίας. Acts xv. 9.

We are told, that faith doth *purify our ſouls*, and *cleanſe our hearts*; that is, our whole interior man, all the faculties of our ſoul; diſpoſing them to an univerſal obedience and conformity to God's holy will; and ſo it is; for faith not only doth clear our underſtanding from its defects, (blindneſs, ignorance, error, doubt,) but it cleanſeth our will from its vicious inclinations, (from ſtubborn, froward, wanton, giddy humours;) it freeth our affections from diſorder and diſtemper, in tendency toward bad objects, and in purſuit of indifferent things with immoderate violence; it purgeth our conſcience, or reflexive powers, from anxious fear, ſuſpicion, anguiſh, dejection, deſpair, and all ſuch paſſions which corrode and fret the ſoul: how it effecteth this we might declare; but we cannot better ſet forth its efficacy and puiſſance, than by conſidering the ſpecial and immediate influence it plainly hath in the production of each virtue, or on the performance of every duty; *Add to your faith virtue*, ſaith St. Peter; implying the natural order of things, and that if true faith precede, virtue will eaſily follow.

2 Pet. i. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 22.

The chief of all virtues, *piety*, (compriſing the love of God, fear and reverence of him, confidence in him, gratitude for his favours and mercies, devotion toward him, a diſpoſition to worſhip and ſerve him,) ſeemeth according to reaſon inevitably conſequent from it; for can we believe God ſuperexcellent in all perfection, and immenſely benign toward us; can we be perſuaded that in free goodneſs he did create us, and doth continually preſerve us in being; that his bounty hath conferred on us all our endowments of ſoul, and all our accommodations of life; that he hath a tender deſire of our welfare, from which even our moſt heinous offences and provocations cannot divert him; that he moſt wonderfully hath provided for our happineſs; in order thereto, when we had rebelled

and revolted from him, ſending down out of his boſom, from the top of celeſtial glory and bliſs, his only dear Son, into this baſe and frail ſtate, to ſuſtain the infirmities of our nature, the inconveniences of a poor life, the pains of a bitter and ſhameful death, for our recovery from ſin and miſery; that with infinite patience he driveth on this gracious deſign, continually watching over us, attracting us to good, and reclaiming us from evil by his grace, notwithſtanding our frequent and ſtiff reluctancies thereto; can, I ſay, we heartily believe theſe points, and not love him? Can the eye of faith behold ſo lovely beauty, ſo raviſhing ſweetneſs in him, and the heart not be affected? Can we apprehend ſo many miracles of nature, of providence, of grace performed by him for our ſake, and not be thankful to him? Can we likewiſe believe God infinitely powerful, infinitely juſt, infinitely pure, and withal not dread him, not adore him? Can we believe him moſt able, moſt willing, moſt ready to do us good, and not confide in him? or can we take him to be moſt veracious, moſt faithful, moſt conſtant, and not rely on his promiſes? Can we avow him to be our Maker, our Patron, our Lord, our Judge, and not deem ourſelves much obliged, much concerned to ſerve him? Can we believe, that God in our need is acceſſible, that he calleth and inviteth us to him, that he is ever willing and ever ready to hear us, that he is by promiſe engaged to grant us whatever we do with humble fervency and conſtancy requeſt; yet forbear to pray, or eaſily deſiſt from it? Do we believe his omnipreſence and omniſcience; that he is with us wherever we go, doth know all we think, hear all we ſay, ſee all we do; and will not belief engage us to think honeſtly, to ſpeak reverently, to act innocently and decently before him? Do we believe, that God's commands do proceed from that will, to which rectitude is eſſential; from that wiſdom, which infallibly diſcerneth what is juſt and fit; from that goodneſs, which will require from us nothing but what is beſt for us; from that unqueſtionable and uncontrollable authority, to which all things are ſubject, and muſt ſubmit; will not this ſufficiently engage us to obe-

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dience? Surely the real belief (ſuch as we have about common things, apprehended by our reaſon or by our ſenſe) of any ſuch divine act, or attribute, cannot fail to ſtrike pious affection, and pious awe into us.

After piety, the next great virtue is *charity*, the which
2 Tim. i. 15. alſo is eaſily derived *from a pure heart*, as St. Paul ſpeaketh, *and faith unfeigned*; it repreſenting peculiar obligations and inducements thereto, from the moſt peremptory commands of God, from the ſignal recompenſes annexed to that duty, from the ſtrict relations between Chriſtians, from the ſtupendous patterns of charity ſet before us. Who can withhold love from him, whom he believeth his brother, in a way far nobler than that of nature, ſo conſtituted by God himſelf, the common Father, by ſpiritual regeneration, and adoption of grace; whom he believeth born of the ſame heavenly ſeed, renewed after the ſame divine image, quickened by the ſame Holy Spirit; united to him not only in blood, but in ſoul; reſembling him, not in temper of body or lineaments of face, but in conformity of judgment and practice; partner of the one inheritance, and deſtinated to lead a life with him through all eternity, in peaceful conſortſhip of joy and bliſs? Who can deny him love, whom he believeth out of the ſame miſerable caſe by the ſame price redeemed into the ſame ſtate of mercy? for whom he by faith vieweth the common Saviour diveſting himſelf of glory, pinching himſelf with want, wearying himſelf with labour, loaded with contumelies, groaning under pain, weltering in blood, and breathing out his ſoul, propounding all this as an example of our charity, and demanding it from us as the moſt ſpecial inſtance of our grateful obedience to him? What greater endearments can be imagined, what more potent incentives of love, what more indiſſoluble bands of friendſhip, than are theſe? Can ſuch a believer forbear to wiſh his neighbour well, to have complacence in his good, to ſympathiſe with his adverſities, to perform all offices of kindneſs to him? Can he in the need of his brother *ſhut up his bowels of compaſſion*, or withhold his hand from relieving him? Can a man know that God required

this practice as the noblest fruit of our faith, and most acceptable part of our obedience, which he hath promised to crown with most ample rewards; can he believe, that God will recompense his *labour of love* with everlasting rest, and for a small expence of present goods will bestow immense treasures in the other world, and yet abstain from charitable beneficence? Who can forbear sowing, that believeth he shall reap so plentiful a crop; or abstain from dealing in that heavenly trade, whereby he is assured to be so vast a gainer?

In like manner is faith productive of *meekness*, in comporting with injuries, discourtesies, neglects, and provocations of any kind: for who can be fiercely angry, who can entertain any rancorous grudge or displeasure against him, whom he believeth his brother, and that upon so many accounts he is obliged to love him? Who that believeth God hath pardoned him so much, and doth continually bear so many wrongs, so many indignities from him, will not in conscience and gratitude toward God, and in compliance with so great an example, bear with the infirmities of his neighbour? Who can look upon the pattern of his Saviour, patiently enduring so many grievous affronts, without a disposition to imitate him, and to do the like for his sake? Who that taketh himself for a child of God, a citizen of heaven, an heir of eternal glory, can be so much concerned in any trivial accident here; can design to have his passion stirred for any worldly respect? as if his honour could be impaired, or his interest suffer diminution by any thing said or done here below.

Again, Faith is the mother of *sincerity*, that comprehensive virtue, which seasoneth all other virtues, and keepeth them sound: for it assuring us, that an all-seeing eye doth view our heart, doth *encompass our paths*, is present to all our closest retirements; that *all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do*, how vain must it appear to us anywise to dissemble, or prevaricate, speaking otherwise than we think, acting otherwise than we pretend, seeming otherwise than we are; concealing our real intents, or disguising them under masks of deceit-

Ps. cxxxix. 2.
Heb. iv. 13.

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ful appearance! If we believe that we ſhall be judged, not according to the opinions of men concerning us, or our port and garb in this world, but as we are in ourſelves, and according to ſtricteſt truth; that in the cloſe of things we ſhall be ſet forth in our right colours and complexion, all varniſh being wiped away; that all our thoughts, words, and deeds ſhall be expoſed to moſt public cenſure; that hypocriſy will be a ſore aggravation of our ſin, and much increaſe our ſhame; how can we ſatisfy ourſelves otherwiſe than in the pure integrity of our heart, and clear uprightneſs of our dealing?

Likewiſe the admirable virtue of *humility*, or ſobriety of mind, doth ſprout from faith; informing us, that we have nothing of our own to boaſt of, but that all the good we have, we can do, we may hope for, are debts we owe to God's pure bounty and mercy; prompting us to aſſume nothing to ourſelves, but to aſcribe all the honour of our endowments, of our performances, of our advantages unto God; keeping us in continual dependance upon God for the ſuccours of his providence and his grace; repreſenting to us our natural weakneſs, vileneſs, and wretchedneſs, together with the adventitious defects and diſadvantages from our wilful miſbehaviour, the unworthineſs of our lives, the many heinous ſins we have committed, and the grievous puniſhments we have deſerved.

He who by the light of faith doth ſee, that he came naked into the world, heir to nothing but the ſad conſequences of the original apoſtaſy; that he is a worm, crawling on earth, feeding on duſt, and tending to corruption; that he liveth only by reprieve from that fatal ſentence, *The day thou ſinneſt thou ſhalt die*; that he was a caitiff wretch, a mere ſlave to ſin, a forlorn captive of hell; and that all his recovery thence, or capacity of a better ſtate, is wholly due to mercy; that he ſubſiſteth only upon alms, and hath nothing but his ſins and miſeries, which he may call his own; he that believeth theſe things, what conceit can he have of himſelf, what confidence in his own worth, what complacency in his eſtate?

Faith alſo doth engage to the virtue of *temperance*;

discovering not only the duty, but the necessity thereof, in regard to our state, which is a state of continual exercise and strife; wherefore as wrestlers with many strong adversaries, as racers for a noble prize, we by good diet and constant labour must keep ourselves in heart, in temper, in breath to perform those combats; according to that of St. Paul, *Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.* 1 Cor. ix. 25.

Again, Faith is productive of *contentedness* in our state: for how is it possible that he, who is fully satisfied that God appointeth his station, and allotteth his portion to each one; that all occurrences depend on his will, and are managed by his providence, should take any thing amiss; as if it could hap better, than as infinite goodness pleaseth, and infinite wisdom determineth? How can he, that believeth God most powerful and able, most kind and willing, ever present and ready to help him, be in any case disconsolate, or despair of seasonable relief? What can discompose him, who knoweth himself, if he pleaseth, immoveably happy; that his best good is secure from all attacks, and beyond the reach of any misfortune; that desiring what is best, he cannot fail of his desire; that (himself excepted) all the world cannot considerably wrong or hurt him?

He that is assured, those precepts (*Be careful for nothing; Cast all your burden on God; Be content with such things as ye have*) were not given to mock and gull us; that those declarations and promises (*There is no want to them that fear God; No good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly; There shall no evil happen to the just; The desire of the righteous shall be granted; All things work together for good to them who love God; Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you*) were seriously made, and will surely be performed, how loose must his mind be from all solicitude and anxiety! how steady a calm, how sweet a serenity will that faith spread over his soul, in regard to all worldly contingencies!

Matt. vi. 25. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Heb. xiii. 5. Luke xii. 29. Psal. xxxiv. 9. viii. 11. Prov. xii. 21. x. 24. Rom. viii. 28. Matt. vi. 33.

It will also beget a cheerful *tranquillity* of mind, and

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peace of conſcience, in regard to our future ſtate; that which St. Paul calleth *all joy* and *peace in believing;* which the Apoſtle to the Hebrews termeth *the confidence and rejoicing of hope;* of which St. Peter ſaith, *Believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable and full of glory:* for he that is perſuaded that God (in whoſe diſpoſal his fortune and felicity are) is reconciled and kindly affected toward him; that he doth concern himſelf in deſigning and procuring his ſalvation; that to purchaſe the means thereof for him, the Son of God purpoſely came down, and ſuffered death; that an act of oblivion is paſt, and a full remiſſion of ſins exhibited to him, if he will embrace it; that now *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus;* and that, *being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God;* that bleſſing is his portion, and that an eternal heritage of joy is reſerved for him, what eaſe muſt he find in his conſcience, what comfort muſt poſſeſs his heart! how effectually will that of the Prophet be accompliſhed in him, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee!*

Rom. xv. 13. Heb. iii. 6. ix. 14. 1 Pet. i. 8. Rom. viii. 1. v. 1. Col. i. 5. Iſa. xxvi. 3.

Again, It is faith which breedeth the *courage*, and upholdeth the *patience* requiſite to ſupport us in our ſpiritual courſe.

It doth inſpire *courage*, prompting to attempt the braveſt enterpriſes, diſpoſing to proſecute them reſolutely, and enabling happily to achieve them: for he that believeth himſelf in his undertakings backed by Omnipotence, and that, as St. Paul, *he can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening him*, what ſhould he fear to ſet upon, what difficulty ſhould keep him off, what hazard ſhould diſmay him? he that knoweth himſelf, by reaſon of the ſuccour attending him, infinitely to overmatch all oppoſition, whom ſhould he not dare to encounter? May he not well ſay with David; *The Lord is my light and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid?* Let all the world, let earth and hell combine to invade him, how can that mate his ſpirit, if he believe they cannot overthrow him, or hurt him, being ſecured by the invincible protection of him, to

Phil. iv. 13. (Phil. i. 28. 1 John iv. 4.) Pſ. xxvii. 1. cxviii. 6. Chryſ. tom. vii. p. 51. Pſal. xlvi. 1, 2.

whoſe will all things do bow; in compariſon to whom nothing is puiſſant, beſide whom nothing is really formidable; ſeeing none but *he* can *kill*, none can touch the ſoul? SERM. III. Matt. x. 28.

If we be armed with the ſpiritual panoply, having our head covered *with the helmet of ſalvation*, our heart guarded with *the breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs*, our *loins girt about with truth*, our *feet ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel of peace*, all our body ſheltered by the impenetrable *ſhield of faith*; and wielding in our hands by faith the *penetrant two-edged ſword of the Spirit*; *which is the word of God*; what aſſaults may we not ſuſtain, what foes ſhall we not eaſily repel? Eph. vi. 15. 1 Theſſ. v. 8. Rom. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. vi. 7. Heb. iv. 12.

The moſt redoubtable enemy we have is our own *fleſh*, which, with a mighty force of violent appetites and impetuous paſſions, is ever ſtruggling with our reaſon and warring againſt our ſoul; yet it faith alone dareth to reſiſt, and is able to quell; oppoſing to the preſent delights of ſenſe the hopes of future joy, quaſhing tranſitory ſatisfactions by the fears of endleſs torment. Gal. v. 17. Rom. vii. 23. 1 Pet. ii. 11.

The *world* is another powerful enemy; ever ſtriving, by its corrupt principles, by its bad examples, by its naughty faſhions, by its menaces of perſecution, damage, and diſgrace, by its promiſes of vain honour, baſe profit, and foul pleaſure, to overthrow and undo us; but a reſolute faith will defeat its attempts; for, *He*, ſaith St. John, *that is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith:* the faith of a better world will defend us from the frowns and the flatteries of this; the riches, glories, and joys of heaven, thereby preſented to our minds, will ſecure us from being enchanted with the wealth, ſplendors, and pleaſures of earth. 1 John v. 4. (2 Pet. i. 4. Eph. iv. 22.)

Another fierce adverſary is the curſed *fiend*; who ever, *like a roaring lion, goeth about ſeeking to devour us*, or like a treacherous ſnake lieth in wait to bite us; raiſing panic fears to daunt and affright us; laying ſubtle trains of temptation to abuſe and ſeduce us: but him by reſiſtance we may eaſily put to flight, for, *Reſiſt the Devil*, ſaith St. 1 Pet. v. 8. Jam. iv. 7. Eph. iv. 27.

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James, *and he will flee from you;* and how we must resist him St. Peter telleth us, *Whom resist steadfast in faith;* and St. Paul also, *Above all,* saith he, *taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one:* if we hold forth this glittering shield, it will dazzle his sight, and damp his courage; being not able to endure its lustre, or stand its opposition, he will instantly retire; fearing that by our victory over his temptations (through reliance on God's help, and adherence to his truth) our reward shall be heightened, and his torment (the torment of improsperous envy and baffled malice) be increased.

1 Pet. v. 9. Eph. vi. 16.

Faith also will arm us with *patience* to endure whatever events shall be dispensed with alacrity and comfort; lightening the most heavy burdens imposed on us, sweetening the most distasteful occurrences incident to us: for,

He who is persuaded, that by any damage here sustained for conscience toward God, he shall become a huge gainer, *receiving,* as the Gospel promiseth, *an hundred fold, and inheriting eternal life,* what will he not gladly lose? will he not willingly put forth all he hath in this most profitable usury? will he not, as those Hebrews did, *take joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing that he hath in heaven a better and an enduring substance?*

Matt. xix. 29. Luke xviii. 30. Phil. iii. 8. Heb. x. 34.

He who believeth, that in regard to any disgrace cast on him for his virtue, he shall be honoured by God, and crowned with heavenly glory, will he not in a manner be proud and ambitious of such disgrace? will he not, as the Apostles did, *rejoice, that he is counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ?*

Matt. v. 12. Acts v. 41. 1 Pet. iv. 14.

He who trusteth, that for a little pains taken in God's service, he shall receive πολὺν μισθὸν, *abundant wages,* far exceeding the merit of his labour, will he not cheerfully bear any toil or drudgery therein?

Matt. v. 12. Luke vi. 35. 1 Cor. iii. 8.

He who, with St. Paul, *computeth, that the light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed;* and that *those light momentany afflictions do work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory;* will they not indeed be light

Rom. viii. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

unto him; will he not feel them lying on him, as a few straws or feathers?

He who conceiveth our Lord's word true, that *by losing his life he shall find it*, or that death shall become to him a door into a happy immortality, would he not gladly upon such terms be *killed all the day long*, and *be always delivered unto death for Jesus?*

He who by faith is assured, that any disasters befalling him are not inflictions of wrath, but expressions of love toward him, by God in kindness dispensed as trials of his faith [a], as exercises of his virtue, as occasions of his acquiring more plentiful rewards, how can he be disgusted at them, or discomposed by them? why should he not rather accept them as favours, as felicities, with a thankful and joyful heart; [b] *counting it*, as St. James adviseth, *all joy, when he falleth into divers temptations?*

In fine, it is faith alone which can plant in us that which is the root of all contentedness and all patience; a just indifference and unconcernedness about all things here: [c] it alone can untack our minds and affections from this world, rearing our souls from earth, and fixing them in heaven; for if we are persuaded, there is a state of life infinitely more desirable than the best condition here; if we believe there are things attainable by us, incomparably better than any which this world affordeth; in respect to which all these glories are but smoke, all these riches are but dirt, all these delights are but dreams, all these businesses are but triflings, all these substances are but shadows; how in our minds can we prize, how in our affections can we cleave unto these things! how then can we find in our hearts to spend upon them more care or pain than is needfull!

Omnia imaginaria in seculo, et nihil veri. *Tert. de Cor.* c. 13.

He that taketh himself here to be out of his element, that he is but *a stranger and sojourner upon earth*, that he *hath here no abiding city*, no country, no house, no land, no treasure, no considerable interest, but that he is merely wayfaring, in passage toward his true home and heavenly country; *the Jerusalem above*, whereof he is a citizen, where his grand concerns do lie, where he hath reserved

Ἡ πρώτη ἀρετὴ, καὶ ἡ πᾶσα ἀρετὴ τὸ ξένον εἶναι τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. *Chrys. in Heb.* xi. 13.

Matt. x. 39. xvi. 25. Luke xvii. 33. (Ps. cxxvi. 5. 2 Tim. ii. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 18. Rom. viii. 17. 2 Cor. iv. 10. Phil. i. 29.) Rom. viii. 36. 2 Cor. iv. 11. 1 Cor. iv. 9. Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13. [a] Jam. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 5. Rom. v. 3. Matt. v. 12. [b] Jam. i. 2. Rom. v. 3. Luke vi. 23. [c] Col. iii. 1.

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for him immoveable poſſeſſions and unvaluable treaſures; where he is deſigned to enjoy moſt noble privileges and moſt illuſtrious dignities in the court of the great King; how can he have his heart here ſticking in this earthly clay, entangled with the petty cares, amuſed with the ſorry entertainments of this life? how can he otherwiſe than with St. Paul be dead, and *crucified to this world?* how can he withhold his mind from ſoaring thither in contemplation, and in affection dwelling there, whither his deſires and hopes do all tend, where his joy and felicity are found, where the great objects of his eſteem and love do reſide?

Gal. vi. 14. ii. 20. Ἐκεῖ μετοικίζει τὴν ψυχὴν ὁ νοῦς. *Chryſ. hom. v. Or. 55.*

But you will perhaps interpoſe, and ſay; Theſe are indeed fine ſayings, but where do ſuch effects appear? who, I pray, doth practiſe according to theſe notions? where is that gallant to be found, who doth work ſo great exploits? where may we diſcern that height of piety, that tenderneſs of charity, that meek comportment with injuries and affronts, that clear ſincerity, that depth of humility, that ſtrictneſs of temperance, that perfect contentedneſs, and undiſturbed calmneſs of mind, that ſtoutneſs of courage and ſtiffneſs of patience, which you talk of as the undoubted iſſues of faith? who is the man that with ſuch glee doth hug afflictions, or biddeth adverſity ſo welcome to his home? where dwell they, who ſo little regard this world, or ſo much affect the other? do we not ſee men run as if they were wild after preferment, wealth, and pleaſure? what do they elſe, but ſcrape and ſcramble and ſcuffle for theſe things? doth not every man moan the ſcantneſs of his lot, doth not every man flinch at any trouble, doth not every one with all his might ſtrive to rid himſelf of any thing diſguſtful to his ſenſe or fancy? Are not therefore ſuch encomiums of faith mere ſpeculations, or brave rhodomontades of divinity?

The objection, I confeſs, is a ſhrewd one; but I muſt reply to it: you ſay, Where are ſuch effects, where are ſuch men? I aſk then, Where is faith, where are believers? ſhew me the one, and I will ſhew you the other: if ſuch effects do not appear, it is no argument that faith cannot

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roduce them, but a ſign that faith is wanting; as if a ree doth not put forth in due ſeaſon, we conclude the root is dead; if a fountain yield no ſtreams, we ſuppoſe it dried up: *Shew me*, ſaith St. James, *thy faith by thy* Jam. ii. 18. *works*; implying, that if good works do not ſhine forth in the converſation, it is ſuſpicious there is no true faith in the heart: for ſuch faith is not a feeble weening, or a notion ſwimming in the head, it is not a profeſſion iſſuing from the mouth, it is not following ſuch a garb, or adhering to ſuch a party, but a perſuaſion fixed in the heart by good reaſon, by firm reſolution, by lively ſenſe; it is *with* Rom. x. 8. *the heart*, as St. Paul ſaith, *man believeth unto righteouſneſs*; that is the faith we ſpeak of, and to which we aſcribe the production of ſo great and worthy effects: if a man wanteth that, atteſted by practice ſuitable, though he know all the points exactly, though he readily will ſay amen to every article of the Creed, though he wear all the badges of a Chriſtian, though he frequent the congregations, and comply with the forms of our religion, yet is he really an infidel: for is he not an infidel who denieth God? and is he not ſuch a renegado who liveth impiously? he is ſo in St. Paul's account; for, *They profeſs*, Tit. i. 16. ſaith he of ſuch perſons, *that they know God, but in works they deny him*; and, *He is not a Jew*, ſaith the ſame Rom ii. 28. Apoſtle, (he is not a Chriſtian, may we by parity of reaſon affirm,) *who is one outwardly; but he is a Chriſtian who is one inwardly, and faith is that of the heart, in the ſpirit, and not in the letter, whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God*: we may attribute to a barren conceit, or to a formal profeſſion, the name of faith, but it is in an equivocal or wide ſenſe; as a dead man is called a man, or a dry ſtick reſting in the earth a tree; for ſo *faith*, ſaith St. James, *without* Jam. ii. 17. *works is dead*; is indeed but a trunk, or carcaſe of faith, reſembling it in outward ſhape, but void of its *ſpirit* and Jam. ii. 26. life.

To our infidelity therefore, that overſpreading vice; to the unſincerity, or deadneſs of our faith, the great defects of our practice are to be imputed; that is the grand ſource from which impiety doth ſo overflow; that ſo few

SERM. III. instances of sprightly virtue are visible, may be a sign the time is the same, or very like to that, of which our Lord saith, *When the Son of man cometh, shall he indeed find faith upon the earth?*

Luke xviii. 8.

But if such effects can now rarely be found, yet time hath been, when they were more rife, scarce any time hath been quite destitute of them; every age since the foundation of things may have tokens and trophies to shew of faith's victorious efficacy; so many actions as there have been truly great and glorious, so many gallant feats have been achieved by faith: if we survey the lives of the ancient Patriarchs, of the Prophets, of the Apostles, of the Martyrs and Confessors of true religion, their faith in all their works is most conspicuous.

Heb. xi. 4.

Faith recommended that *excellent sacrifice of Abel* to Divine acceptance, and advanced him to the rank of first martyr for piety.

On the wings of faith did Enoch mount to heaven, snatching the reward due to his faithful, and therefore well-pleasing obedience.

Faith preserved Noah from two mighty deluges, one of sin, the other of water, overflowing the earth; by it he stemmed the torrent of the one, and rode on the back of the other; it encouraged him to be *a preacher of righteousness* against the grain, and a practiser of it against the fashion of the world, not regarding the common hatred and envy which he did incur thereby; it moved him to undertake that great and strange work of building the ark, for a sanctuary and seminary of mankind; the type of that spiritual vessel, by embarking into which through faith we are saved from utter ruin.

2 Pet. ii. 5. Gen. vii. 2.

Faith disposed Abraham to forsake his country and home, his estate, his kindred, following Divine conduct *he knew not whither;* to wander abroad and sojourn among barbarous strangers: faith inclined him, at God's command, to sacrifice his only son, a goodly youth in the flower of his age and hopes, worthily most dear unto him; the son of his old age, and the comfort thereof, given to him by miracle and in special favour; the prop

Heb. xi. 8. Chrys. tom. vii. p. 17.

of his family, and the heir of promiſe, by whom his ſeed was to be propagated, and his memory to flouriſh; him was he ready in obedience with his own hand to ſlay, quelling nature and his bowels, thwarting his own hopes, defying all ſemblances of contradiction, or claſhing between the commands and promiſes of God. SERM. III.

Faith, through the rudeſt efforts of envy and malice, through the diſmal calamities of exile and ſlavery, through hideous ſnares of temptation, through villanous ſlanders, through loathſome priſons and fetters of iron, all along ſuſtained with admirable moderation and preſence of mind, did rear up Joſeph to the helm of that great kingdom.

The ſame inclined Moſes to exchange the dignities and delights of a court for a ſtate of vagrancy and ſervility; it heartened him to outbrave the invincible obſtinacy of a mighty prince; it ſteeled him with patience to conduct for the ſpace of forty years, through a wild deſert, a moſt perverſe and mutinous herd of people.

Faith was mother of that renowned patience, which exhauſted Satan's quiver, ſpent all his artillery, and wore out his invention in ſuggeſting miſchiefs; *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, was the rock, on which that unſhakeable patience of Job was founded. Chryſ. tom. vii. p. 17. Job xix. 25.

That pricked the ruddy ſtripling forward, naked and unarmed, with undaunted heart and countenance, to invade the monſter of Gath, that tower of fleſh, ſwelling with rage and pride, and all fenced with braſs and ſteel; *Thou comeſt to me*, ſaid he, *with a ſword, and with a ſpear, and with a ſhield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hoſts*: there lay his confidence, thence ſprung his admirable courage. 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

To *this* the bold attempts, and the glorious victories of Joſhua, of Gideon, of Barak, of Jephtha, of Samſon, of Jonathan, of the Maccabees, are worthily aſcribed, who with ſmall forces, upon great diſadvantages, did aſſault, did vanquiſh mighty enemies and oppreſſors.

This inflamed the zeal of Elias, by which he *alone* did check and control the degenerate follies of his nation, ſurmounting the indignation of princes which favoured 1 Kings xviii. 36. xix. 20.

SERM. III.

them; it fed him in the wilderness by the purveyance of ravens; it framed the wheels of that fiery chariot, which transported him into heaven.

2 Kings ii. 11.

This made Jeremy, with like zeal and courage, dare to carry most unwelcome news and unpleasant messages to an outrageous people, not daunted by their angry menaces or cruel misusages; *his feet sunk into the mire,* but faith bore up his heart above all discouragement.

Jer. xxxviii. 4, 6.

This saved the conscience of those three brave youths clear from that impiety into which barbarous violence would have driven them, so that neither the fury of that great monarch nor his gaping furnace could terrify them into sin; faith putting into their mouths those manful words, *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king; but if not, be it known unto thee, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image, which thou hast set up:* their faith carried them undaunted into the flames, and kept them untouched within them; so that they became as gold not wasted, but tried and purified in the furnace.

Dan. iii. 16, 17, 18.

Neither could a danger no less terrible scare the noble Daniel from his devotions; his faith did *stop the lions' mouths*; and *he,* saith the text, *was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he trusted in his God.*

Heb. xi. 33. Dan. vi. 10, 22, 23.

Such exploits of spiritual prowess were achieved by an Old Testament faith, relying upon God's attributes and providence, although wanting a clear revelation of the promises, which then lay wrapped up in mysteries and shadows; but more heroical acts of fortitude and patience did the bright sunshine of grace and glory upon the minds of our Apostles and primitive saints produce: animated by faith, a little troop of them marched out with resolution to attack all the powers of hell, and to beat down the kingdom of darkness, to dispatch all the prejudices and errors of mankind, and to subdue the world to the obedience of Christ; so armed, successfully did they

SERM. III.

knock down and trample upon all opposition to their glorious designs; they defeated all the secular power and policy, they baffled all the wit, the learning, the eloquence, which stood in their way, or gave them resistance; they triumphed over persecutions, and in regard to all sufferings *were more than conquerors;* to forsake and forfeit all they had, was their gain; to *have nothing*, was their wealth; to incur disgraces, was their glory; to be in continual labour and travail, was their ease; fastings, hunger, and thirst, were their pleasure, their feast, their luxury; prisons were chapels to them, in which they preached, and prayed, and sang praises to God; their joy was to suffer; to receive stripes, and undergo torments, was their triumph and their glory; they constantly defied, they often courted, death.

Rom. viii. 35. Eph. iii. 13. Acts xvi. 25.

That they were able to perform such prodigious acts, and to endure things so insupportable, was not from a stupid insensibility of things, from a sturdiness of spirit, or stiffness of humour; but from a true magnanimity inspired by faith; because they were persuaded of God's will, because they confided in God's help, because they relied on God's word, because they did expect rewards from God able to satisfy for all their pains and losses; this made them to undertake so bold enterprises, and carried them with insuperable constancy through all; hence were they glad to abandon their ease and pleasure, to prostitute their honour and reputation, to part with their substance, to venture their safety, to sacrifice their lives for God's truth; *Therefore do we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, specially of those that believe*, is the short account, which St. Paul rendereth of it: and infallibly the like effects will faith produce, wherever it is found, in a degree proportionable to its sincerity and strength.

1 Tim. iv. 10. (Rom. viii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 11. 1 Pet. i. 7. iv. 13. 2 Tim. iv. 8.)

A grain of faith, our Saviour saith, *is able to remove mountains;* that is, to accomplish things in appearance very strange and difficult: and, *To him that believeth all things are possible*, saith the same mouth of truth: and, *He*, saith our Lord again, *that believeth in me, the works*

Matt. xvii. 20. xxi. 21. Luke xvii. 6. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Mark. xi. 23. ix. 23. John xiv. 12. Chrys. tom. vii. Or. 64.

SERM. III. *that I do, he alſo ſhall do, and greater works than theſe ſhall he do.* If this be true in reference to works concerning the frame of nature, it is ſurely no leſs true in regard to thoſe which lie within the more proper ſphere of faith, to moral and ſpiritual operations: if faith can obtain the help of God, enabling to transfer a mountain, it alſo can procure his grace diſpoſing to reſtrain an appetite, or repreſs a paſſion.

Now that which is in itſelf ſo worthy and lovely, which is attended with ſo good conſorts, which is the daughter of ſo excellent cauſes, the ſiſter of ſo great virtues, the parent of ſo admirable effects, how can it otherwiſe than be very precious, very laudable, very acceptable? how can we at all wonder that it ſhould be graced with ſuch commendations, and crowned with ſuch rewards?

Let us therefore (to conclude) be exhorted, if we do want it, to endeavour the acquiſt of it by all proper means, (by ſerious contemplation and ſtudy, by prayer to God, by voiding all obſtructions of it:) if we have it, to hold it faſt, to cheriſh it, to improve it, as by all good ways, ſo eſpecially by good practice; that we may produce the good fruits, and obtain the happy rewards thereof, through the mercies of God in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to whom for ever be all praiſe.

Chryſ. in Joh. Or. 6.

Rom. xv. 13. *Now the God of all hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghoſt.* Amen.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON IV.

OF JUSTIFYING FAITH.

ROM. V. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

THEREFORE; that word implies the text to be a conclusion (by way of inference, or of recapitulation) resulting from the precedent discourse; it is indeed the principal conclusion, which (as being supposed a peculiar and a grand part of the Christian doctrine, and deserving therefore a strong proof and clear vindication) St. Paul designed by several arguments to make good. Upon the words, being of such importance, I should so treat, as first to explain them, or to settle their true sense; then to make some practical application of the truths they contain. SERM. IV.

As to the explicatory part, I should consider first, what the faith is, by which we are said to be justified; 2. what being justified doth import; 3. how by such faith we are so justified; 4. what the peace with God is, here adjoined to justification; 5. what relation the whole matter bears to our Lord Jesus Christ; or how through him being justified, we have peace with God; in the prosecution of which particulars it would appear, who the persons justified are, and who justifies us; with other circumstances incident.

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I shall at this time only insist upon the first particular, concerning the notion of faith proper to this place; in order to the resolution of which inquiry, I shall lay down some useful observations: and,

1. First, I observe, that *faith*, or belief, in the vulgar acception, doth signify (as we have it briefly described in Aristotle's Topics) a σφοδρὰ ὑπόληψις, *an earnest opinion* or persuasion of mind concerning the truth of some matter propounded. Such an opinion being produced by, or grounded upon some forcible reason, (either immediate evidence of the matter, or sense and experience, or some strong argument of reason, or some credible testimony; [a] for whatever we assent unto, and judge true upon any such grounds and inducements, we are commonly said to believe,) this is the popular acception of the word; and according thereto I conceive it usually signifies in holy Scripture; which being not penned by masters of human art or science, nor directed to persons of more than ordinary capacities or improvements, doth not intend to use words otherwise than in the most plain and ordinary manner.

Top. 4, 5.

Belief therefore in general, I suppose, denotes a firm persuasion of mind concerning the truth of what is propounded; whether it be some one single proposition, (as when Abraham believed, that *God was able to perform what he had promised;* and Sarah, that *God, who had promised, was faithful,*) or some system of propositions, as when we are said to *believe God's word*, (that is, all which by his Prophets was in his name declared;) to *believe the truth*, (that is, all the propositions taught in the true religion as so;) to *believe God's commandments*, (that is, the doctrines in God's law to be true, and the precepts thereof to be good;) to *believe the Gospel*, (that is, to be

Rom. iv. 21. Heb. xi. 19, 11. Ps. cvi. 24. lxxviii. 32. 2 Thess. ii. 22.

Ps. cxix. 66.

Mark i. 15. Phil. i. 27.

[a] Aut proba esse quæ credis; aut si non probas, quomodo credis? *Tertul. adv. Marc.* v. 1.

Ὅταν γάρ πως πιστεύῃ, καὶ γνώριμοι αὐτῷ ὦσιν αἱ ἀρχαὶ, ἐπίστασθαι. *Arist. Eth.* vi. 3.

Ἀριστοτέλης τὸ ἐπόμενον τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ κρῖμα ὡς ἀληθὲς, τὸ δέ τι πίστιν εἶναί φησι. *Clem. Strom.* ii. p. 287.

Ἔνιοι γὰρ πιστεύουσιν οὐδὲν ἧττον οἷς δοξάζουσιν, ἢ ἔτιροι οἷς ἐπίστανται. *Arist. Eth.* vii. 3.

perſuaded of the truth of all the propoſitions aſſerted or declared in the Goſpel.)

2. I obſerve, ſecondly, that whereas frequently ſome perſon, or ſingle thing, is repreſented (*verbo tenus*) as the object of faith, this doth not prejudice, or in effect alter the notion I mentioned; for it is only a figurative manner of ſpeaking, whereby is always meant the being perſuaded concerning the truth of ſome propoſition, or propoſitions, relating to that perſon or thing: for otherwiſe it is unintelligible how any incomplex thing, as they ſpeak, can be the complete or immediate object of belief. Beſide ſimple apprehenſion (or framing the bare idea of a thing) there is no operation of a man's mind terminated upon one ſingle object; and belief of a thing ſurely implies more than a ſimple apprehenſion thereof: what it is, for inſtance, to believe this or that propoſition about a man, or a tree, (that a man is ſuch a kind of thing, that a tree hath this or that property,) is very eaſy to conceive; but the phraſe believing a man, or a tree, (taken properly, or excluding figures,) is altogether inſignificant and unintelligible: indeed to believe, πιςεύειν, is the effect τȣ̃ πειθȣ̃ς, of a perſuaſive argument, and the reſult of ratiocination; whence in Scripture it is commended, or diſcommended, as implying a good or bad uſe of reaſon. The proper object of faith is therefore ſome propoſition deduced from others by diſcourſe; as it is ſaid, that *many of the Samaritans believed in Chriſt, becauſe of the woman's word, who teſtified that he told her all that ever ſhe did*; or as St. Thomas *believed, becauſe he ſaw*; or as when it is ſaid, that *many believed on our Lord's name, beholding the miracles which he did:* when then, for example, the Jews are required to believe Moſes, (or to believe in Moſes, after the Hebrew manner of ſpeaking,) it is meant, to be perſuaded of the truth of what he delivered, as proceeding from Divine revelation; or to believe him to be what he profeſſed himſelf, a meſſenger or prophet of God. So *to believe the Prophets*, or in the Prophets, (בְּנְבִיאָיו) was to be perſuaded concerning the truth of what they uttered in God's name, (that the doctrines were true, the com-

Joh. iv. 39.

John xx. 29.

John ii. 23.

Exod. xiv. 31. xix. 9.

John v. 45, &c.

2 Chron. xx. 20.

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mands were to be obeyed, the threats and promises shou
be performed, the predictions should be accomplished: *
believe all which the Prophets did say, as our Savio
speaks; *to believe all things written in the Prophets*, as S
Paul.) So to *believe God's works* (a phrase we have i
the Psalms) signifies, to be persuaded, that those wor
did proceed from God, or were the effects of his goo
providence: to *believe in man* (that which is so often pro
hibited and dissuaded) denotes the being persuaded, th
man in our need is able to relieve and succour us: lastly
to believe in God (a duty so often enjoined and inculcate
is to be persuaded, that God is true in whatever he say
faithful in performance of what he promises; perfectl
wise, powerful, and good; able and willing to do a
good: the being persuaded, I say, of all these propos
tions, or such of them as suit the present circumstance
and occasion, is to believe in God: thus, in fine, to be
lieve on a person, or thing, is only a short expression (figu
ratively) denoting the being persuaded of the truth o
some proposition relating, in one way or other, to the

Luke xxiv. 25.
Acts xxiv. 14.
Ps. lxxviii. 22.
Jer. xvii. 5. xlvi. 25.
Ps. cxviii. 8, &c.

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ined ſenſe, did confiſt: but becauſe from ſuch a per-
ſion (being ſincere, and ſtrong enough) there did natu-
ly and duly reſult a ſatisfaction, or acquieſcence in the
atter enjoined as beſt to be done; a choice and reſolu-
n to comply with God's appointment; an effectual
edience; a cheerful expectation of a good iſſue there-
on; therefore all thoſe diſpoſitions of ſoul and actions
ncurring become expreſſed by the name of faith, (that
ſt perſuaſion being the principle and root of them:) for
is for his faith that he is highly commended; it is for
that he obtained ſo favourable an approbation and
ceptance from God. Yet ſuppoſing Abraham to have
d ſuch a perſuaſion concerning God; and yet to have
liked what God required, or to have reſolved againſt
ing it, or to have indeed diſobeyed, or to have diſre-
arded the happy ſucceſs; it is plain that Abraham as to
e whole matter deſerved rather much blame, than any
ommendation; and would not upon that account have
ad *righteouſneſs imputed to him*, and have been *called the*
riend of God: when therefore his *faith* is ſo magnified,
hat word comprehends not his bare perſuaſion only, but
ll thoſe concomitants thereof, which if they had not
gone along therewith, it had been a proof, that ſuch a
erſuaſion was not ſincere, (not ἀνυπόκριτος πίστις, *an un-*
diſſembled faith; ſuch as St. Paul commends in Timo-
thy,) or not ſtrong enough, (not ἀδιάκριτος πίστις, *an un-*
doubting faith, (but *a weak, a ſmall, a cold*, an ineffec-
tual faith; which come under blame and reproof; but the
effect ſhewed, that he did not, as St. Paul ſays, ἀσθενεῖν
τῇ πίστει, had not a weak, or ſickly faith; nor *ſtaggered at*
the promiſe of God; but *was ſtrong in faith, giving glory*
to God; which he did not only in believing his word, but
n ſuiting his affections, and yielding obedience thereto:
πίστει ὑπήκουσεν ἐξελθεῖν) *by faith he obeyed, ſo as to forſake*
is country, ſays the Apoſtle to the Hebrews; and faith
hus taken is not only a ſingle act of a man's underſtand-
ng, or will, but a complex of many diſpoſitions and ac-
ons, diffuſed through divers faculties of a man, denoting
e whole complication of good diſpoſitions and actions

Rom. iv. 20.

James ii. 23.

1 Tim. i. 5.
2 Tim. i. 5.
James iii. 17.
Rom. iv. 20.
xiv. 1.
1 Cor. viii. 10.
Rom. iv. 19.
Matt. vi. 30.
viii. 26, &c.
Jam. ii. 17, 20.
Gal. v. 6.
Heb. xi. 8.

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relating to one matter; which attend upon a true and earnest persuasion concerning it; right choice, submission, and satisfaction of mind, firm resolution, dutiful obedience, constant and cheerful hope, or the like.

4. I observe more nearly to our purpose, fourthly, that the faith here spoken of (being here and otherwhere put absolutely, or by itself, without any adjunct of limitation or distinction) is often set down with terms annexed thereto, explaining and determining it; being sometimes styled the *faith of Christ, of Jesus, of God,* (τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, τοῦ Θεοῦ,) sometimes *faith upon Christ,* (εἰς Χριστὸν, and ἐπὶ Χριστὸν,) *faith in Christ,* (ἐν Χριστῷ,) *faith to Christ,* to the Lord, to God, (πιστεύειν τῷ Χριστῷ, τῷ Κυρίῳ, τῷ Θεῷ,) *faith upon the name of Christ,* (εἰς ὄνομα,) *faith of his name,* (πίστις τοῦ ὀνόματος,) *faith to his name,* (τῷ ὀνόματι:) which phrases, all questionless denoting the same thing, do imply this faith to consist in being persuaded concerning the truth of some propositions chiefly relating to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, either as grounded upon his authority, or appertaining to his person. Now what such propositions are, we may learn from other expressions, descriptions, or circumlocutions declaring the nature and quality of this faith: it is sometimes called *the belief of the Gospel,* (that is, of the whole system of doctrines, and laws, and promises, and prophecies taught, delivered, or declared by Christ, and his Apostles: [a] *Repent,* said St. John the Baptist, *and believe the Gospel,*) *the belief of the truth,* (that body of truth, signally so called, which was taught by the same authors,) the *acknowledgment of the same truth,* ([b] πιστὸς, and ἐπεγνωκὼς τὴν ἀλήθειαν are in St. Paul the same.) Equivalent to those descriptions of this faith are those expressions, which set it out by yielding assent (generally) to what our Lord Christ and his Apostles taught, or to some chief points of their doctrine, inferring the rest; the [c] *believing,* [d] *hearing,* [e] *receiving the word of God,* of *Christ,* of the *Apostles,* [f] the *receiving Christ's tes-*

Rom. iii. 3, 21, 26. Gal. ii. 16, 20. iii. 22. Phil. iii. 9. Rev. ii. 13. xiv. 12. εἰς, Acts xx. 21. xxiv. 24. xxvi. 18. Col. ii. 5, &c. ἐπὶ, Heb. vi. 1. Acts ix. 42. xxii. 19, &c. ἐν, Gal. iii. 26. 1 Tim. iii. 13. 2 Tim. iii. 15. Acts xiii. 39, &c. τῷ Χρ. Acts v. 14. xvi. 34. xviii. 28. xxvii. 25. John v. 24. x. 37, 38 xiv. 11, &c. εἰς ὄνομα, John i. 12. ii. 23. 1 John v. 13, &c. Acts iii. 16. τοῦ. 1 John iii. 23. τῷ.

[a] Mark i. 15. Phil. i. 27. 1 Pet. iv. 17. 2 Thess. ii. 12, 13. [b] 1 Tim. iv. 3. ii. 4. Tit. i. 1. Heb. x. 26. 1 Tim. ii. 4, &c. [c] John v. 46, 47. [d] John xii. 47. [e] John xii. 48. xvii. 8. Acts xi. 1. [f] John iii. 33.

timony, and (which is the same) [g] *receiving Christ himself*; [h] *coming unto Christ*, (that is, as disciples to their Master, as servants to their Lord, as persons oppressed and enslaved to their Deliverer;) [i] *the believing* (and *knowing*) *that Jesus was sent by God, and came from him*; [k] the believing that Jesus was what he professed himself to be; [l] the *confessing* that *Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, he which should come into the world; the King of Israel; that God raised him from the dead*; by the belief of which one point, as involving the rest, St. Paul expresseth this faith: [m] *If thou*, saith he, *shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

[g] John i. 12. xiii. 20. v. 43.
[h] John vi. 37, 44, 65. v. 40. Matt. xi. 28.
[i] Joh. xvii. 8. v. 24. vi. 29. xi. 42. xvi. 30. xvii. 21.
[k] John viii. 24. xiii. 19.
[l] 1 John iv. 2, 15. v. 1, 5. John iv. 42. i. 49. xx. 31. Acts viii. 37.
[m] Rom. x. 9. Ὁ ἀκούσας παρὰ πατρὸς καὶ μαθὼν, John vi. 45.

The result, upon considering all which expressions declaratory of the nature of this faith (for this surely is not different from that, which is so commonly otherwhere represented in our Saviour's and his Apostles' discourses and writings, as a great duty required of us; as a virtue (or act of virtue) highly commendable, as an especial instrument of our salvation, as a necessary condition prerequisite to our partaking the benefits and privileges by Divine favour conferred on Christians)—the result, I say, is this, that by this faith (as to the first and primary sense thereof) is understood the being truly and firmly persuaded in our minds, that Jesus was what he professed himself to be, and what the Apostles testified him to be; the Messias, by God designed, foretold, and promised to be sent into the world, to redeem, govern, instruct, and save mankind; our Redeemer and Saviour, our Lord and Master, our King and Judge; the great High Priest, and Prophet of God; the being assured of these, and all other propositions connexed with these; or, in short, the being thoroughly persuaded of the truth of that Gospel which was revealed and taught by Jesus and his Apostles. That this notion is true, those descriptions of this faith, and phrases expressing it, do sufficiently shew; the nature and reason of the thing doth confirm the same; for that such a faith is, in its kind and order, apt and sufficient to promote God's design of saving us, to

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render us capable of God's favour; to purge our hearts, and work that change of mind, which is necessary in order to the obtaining God's favour, and enjoying happiness; to produce that obedience, which God requires of us, and without which we cannot be saved; these things are the natural results of such a persuasion concerning those truths; as natural, as the desire and pursuit of any good doth arise from the clear apprehension thereof, or as the shunning of any mischief doth follow from the like apprehension: as a persuasion that wealth is to be got thereby, makes the merchant to undergo the dangers and pains of a long voyage, (verifying that, *Impiger extremos curris mercator ad Indos, Per mare pauperiem fugiens, per saxa, per ignes;*) as the persuasion that health may thereby be recovered, engages a man not only to take down the most unsavoury potions, but to endure cuttings and burnings, (*ut valeas ferrum patieris et ignes;*) as a persuasion, that refreshment is to be found in a place, doth effectually carry the hungry person thither: so a strong persuasion that Christian religion is true, and the way of obtaining happiness, and of escaping misery, doth naturally produce a subjection of heart, and an obedience thereto; and accordingly we see the highest of those effects which the Gospel offers, or requires, are assigned to this faith, as results from it, or adjuncts thereof. Regeneration; *Whosoever,* saith St. John, *believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.* Spiritual union with God; *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God: If what ye have heard from the beginning abide in you, ye shall also abide in the Father and the Son.* The obtaining God's love; *The Father loves you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came from God.* Victory over the world; *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he who believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* Freedom from spiritual slavery, and becoming true disciples of Christ; *If ye abide in my word, ye are truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.* Obtaining everlasting life; *He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me,* (that is, who be-

1 John v. 1.
1 John iv. 15.
1 John ii. 24.
John xvi. 27.
Vid. 2 Thes. ii. 13.
Eph. i. 13.
Acts xv. 7, 9.
1 John v. 5.
John viii. 31, 32.
John v. 24.

ı my word, which is indeed the word of God, who SERM.
ıe, and in whose name I speak,) *hath everlasting life.* IV.
These things were written, that you may believe that John xx.31.
is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing it,
nay have life in his name. Interest in God and
:; *He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he* (ὅτος) 2 John 9.
the Father and the Son. Verily, verily, I say unto John vi. 47.
ie that believeth upon me hath eternal life. Rising iii. 36. xv. 16.
Christ, (that is, as to capacity and right;) *Buried* Col. ii. 12.
im in baptism, wherein you are risen with him through
of the operation of God; who raised him from the
Being saved; *Whoever confesses with his mouth the* Rom. x. 9.
Jesus to be the Son of God; and in his heart believes
'od raised him from the dead, shall be saved. Lastly,
justified; for, St. Paul adjoins, *a man believeth* (in Rom. x. 10.
anner before mentioned) *to righteousness; and with*
nuth confession is made to salvation. So we see, that
ıief of those excellent benefits, to the procuring of
faith (however understood) is anywise conducible,
uisite, do belong to the persuasion concerning evan-
l truths. We may also observe in the history con-
g our Lord, and his Apostles' proceedings toward
s, whom they had converted to Christianity, and
mit to a participation of the privileges thereof, that
ıer faith was by them required in order thereto:
ıch a persuasion appearing, they received them into
ırch, baptized them, pronounced unto them an ab-
ın from their sins, and a reception into God's favour.
vas the faith of Martha, which gave her interest in
omise of eternal life: *Every one,* said our Saviour John xi. 26.
, *living, and believing in me, shall never die: Dost*
elieve this? She saith unto him, Yes, Lord, I have be-
that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should
nto the world. This was the faith, for which our Matt. xvi.
r commends St. Peter, and pronounces him happy. 16, 17. John vi. 69.
appearance of this faith, St. Peter baptized and ad-
: into the church the three thousand persons whom
l converted. (*Then,* says the text, *they who gladly* Οἱ ἀσμένως
lingly) *received his word* (that is, were persuaded of ἀποδεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον.
Acts ii. 41.

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the truth of that doctrine, which is before set down concerning our Lord) *were baptized; and the same day were added* (to the church) *about three thousand souls.*) Upon the like faith the Samaritans were baptized, (*ὅτε ἐπίστευσαν τῷ Φιλίππῳ, when they gave credence to Philip's doctrine.*) And upon the same account did the same Evangelist say it was lawful to baptize the Eunuch, and accordingly did perform it: *If*, saith Philip, *thou believest with thy whole heart, it is lawful*, (or thou mayest be baptized.) *He answering said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. So he baptized him.* This was the faith, upon which St. Paul baptized Lydia, *when she had yeilded assent unto* (so *προσέχειν* doth import in the Acts; not only *προσέχειν νῶν* to yield attention, but *προσέχειν πίστιν* to give assent unto) *the things spoken by St. Paul.* Thus also of those Jews in another place of the Acts, when St. Paul had *opened and alleged, out of the Scriptures, that Christ was to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, and that Jesus was the Christ*, it is said *τινὲς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπείσθησαν, καὶ προσεκληρώθησαν, were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas*, (that is, were received into Christian communion with them.) The same is intimated in other passages of the apostolical history; by all which it appears, that the Apostles' method was to declare and inculcate the main points of the Christian history and doctrine, attesting to the one, and proving the other by testimonies and arguments proper to that purpose; and whoever of their hearers declared himself persuaded of the truth of what they taught, that he did heartily assent thereto, and resolved to profess and practise accordingly, him, without more to do, they presently baptized, and instated him in the privileges appertaining to Christianity; or, in St. Paul's language, did justify them, according to their subordinate manner, as the ministers of God. And thus did the primitive church practise after the Apostles; as Justin the Martyr fully relates of it:—*ὅσοι δὲ πείθωσι, καὶ πιστεύωσιν ἀληθῆ ταῦτα τὰ ὑφ' ἡμῶν διδασκόμενα, καὶ λεγόμενα εἶναι, καὶ ποιεῖν ἅτινας δύνασθαι ὑπισχνοῦνται, &c.—ἄγονται ὑφ' ἡμῶν ἔνθα ὕδωρ ἐστὶ, καὶ τρόπον ἀναγεννήσεως, ὃν καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοὶ ἀνεγεννήθημεν, ἀνα-*

Acts viii. 12.

Acts viii. 37, 38.

Acts xvi. 14, 15.

Acts xvii. 3, 4.

Acts ix. 20. xvi. 32. xvii. 11, 12.

γινώσκεται—*Apol.* 2. *Whoever*, saith he, *are persuaded, and do believe these things by us taught, and said to be true, and undertake that they can live so according to them;—are brought thither, where water is, and are regenerated after the same manner as we have been regenerated.* I farther add, that even this faith is expressed to be the effect of Divine grace and inspiration; for when St. Peter had confessed that *Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God*, our Saviour tells him, *that flesh and blood had not revealed that unto him, but his Father in heaven;* and, *No man*, St. Paul tells us, *can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost:* and, *Every spirit, which confesseth Jesus Christ to have been come in the flesh, is of God*, saith St. John. So that even this is a faith, in respect to which the Holy Ghost is called *the Spirit of faith*, which is the *fruit of the Spirit*, and *the gift of God;* that which *no man can* have without *God's drawing him*, and teaching him; *No man can come unto me, except the Father, that hath sent me, shall draw him* (ἑλκύσῃ αὐτόν). *Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me:* to which it is ordinarily required, that God should *open the heart*, as he did Lydia's heart, *to attend and assent unto what St. Paul taught:* neither doth the Scripture, as I conceive, attribute any thing unto faith, which doth not agree to this notion.

Matt. xvi. 16, 17. 1 Cor. xii. 3. ii. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 19. 1 Joh. iv. 2. (Eph. i. 17, 18.) 2 Cor. iv. 13. Gal. v. 22. Eph. ii. 8. Phil. i. 29. John vi. 44, 45. Acts xvi. 14.

We might lastly adjoin, that this was the common and current notion of faith among the ancient Christians; neither do we, I suppose, meet with any other in their writings; all which things do abundantly confirm the truth thereof.

5. But I must farther observe particularly, (in correspondence to what was before more generally observed,) that this faith doth not only denote precisely and abstractedly such acts of mind, such opinions and persuasions concerning the truth of matters specified, but doth also connote [b] and imply (indeed comprehend according to the meaning of those who use the word) such acts of will, as,

[b] *Salv. de Provid.* iv. 1. Cum hoc sit hominis Christiani fides, fideliter Christi mandata servare, sit absque dubio, ut nec fidem habeat qui infidelis sit, nec Christum credat, qui Christi mandata conculcat, &c.

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ſuppoſing thoſe perſuaſions to be real and complete, are naturally conſequent upon them, and are in a manner neceſſarily coherent with them; a firm reſolution conſtantly to profeſs and adhere unto the doctrine, of which a man is ſo perſuaded; to obey all the laws and precepts, which it contains; forſaking in open profeſſion, and in real practices, all principles, rules, cuſtoms inconſiſtent with thoſe doctrines and laws; that which is called *converſion*, or *returning to the Lord*, (that is, leaving a courſe of rebellion, and diſobedience to thoſe laws, which the Lord in the Goſpel commands, and reſolvedly betaking themſelves to the obſervance of them,) πολύς τε ὄχλος πιστεύσας ἐπέστρεψεν ἐπὶ τὸν Κύριον, *a great multitude*, it is ſaid, *believing, did return unto the Lord;* their faith did carry with it ſuch a converſion. Hence this faith is ſtyled πειθαρχεῖν Θεῷ, *to obey God's command;* ὑπακούειν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, *to obey the Goſpel;* ὑπακούειν τῇ πίστει, *to obey the faith;* ὑποταγὴ τῆς ὁμολογίας εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, (*ſubjection of profeſſing the Goſpel of Chriſt,*) *with purpoſe of heart to adhere unto God; ſtipulation of a good conſcience toward God,* (that which St. Peter intimates, as a neceſſary concomitant of baptiſm, it being a ſincere undertaking, and engaging one's ſelf to obey God's commandments;) in fine, to *repent;* which is either adequately the ſame thing with faith, or included therein, according to the apoſtolical meaning of the word; for that remiſſion of ſins, which is ſometime made the conſequent of faith, is otherwhere expreſsly annexed to repentance: the ſum of the Goſpel our Saviour himſelf expreſſes by the preaching in his name *repentance, and remiſſion of ſins in all nations:* and, *Repent*, St. Peter preached, *and let every one of you be baptized:* and, *Repent*, ſaid he again, *and return, that your ſins may be blotted out:* and, *Then to the Gentiles*, ſay thoſe in the Acts, *hath God given repentance unto life;* which ſignifies the ſame with that other expreſſion concerning the ſame perſons, *God's having purified their hearts by faith;* in which places I take repentance to import the ſame thing with faith; being in effect nothing elſe, but ſincere embracing Chriſtian religion. Now the word *faith* is thus

Acts xi. 21. Vid. Acts ix. 35. xiv. 15. xxvi. 18.
Acts v. 32. 1 Theſ. i. 8. Rom. i. 6. vi. 17. xvi. 16.
2 Cor. ix. 13.
Acts xi. 23
1 Pet. iii. 21.
Luke xxiv. 47.
Acts ii. 38. iii. 19. xvii. 30.
Acts xi. 18.
Acts xv. 9.

extended (beyond its natural and primary force) to comprehend such a compliance of will, or purpose of obedience, because this doth naturally arise from a persuasion concerning the truth of the Gospel, if it be real and strong enough, in that degree, which Christianity requires, and supposes to the effects mentioned in the Gospel; if it be *ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ, in the heart*, (or a hearty faith,) as St. Paul speaks; if it be such as Philip exacts of the Eunuch, *a belief ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας, from the whole heart*; if it have that due plerophory, that stability, that solidity, which the Apostles speak of, for a weak, faint, slight, ill-grounded, ill-rooted opinion concerning the truth of the Gospel, (such as those in another case had, whom our Saviour rebuked with a *τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι; Why are ye fearful, O ye small in faith?* such as St. Peter had, when our Saviour said to him, *ὀλιγόπιστε, εἰς τί ἐδίσασας; O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt?* which faith could not keep them nor him from sinking; not such as those had, who *heard the word, and gladly received it; but wanted root, so that, when persecution or affliction did arise for the word, they were presently scandalized*; not such a faith as those many rulers had, who are said to have *believed in Jesus, but for fear of the Pharisees did not confess him*; not such as Simon Magus had, who is said to have believed Philip, but to no good effect, *because his heart was not right before God*; he having not thoroughly resolved to obey the Gospel; not such as Agrippa had, whom St. Paul had *almost persuaded to be a Christian*)—these sorts of faith are, in comparison to that we speak of, but equivocally so called: it includes a firm resolution to perform carefully all the duties enjoined to Christians, to undergo patiently all the crosses incident to Christianity; it is the same with becoming a disciple of Christ, which a man cannot be without renouncing all other interests and concernments, without *denying one's self, forsaking all and following him*; without *taking his yoke upon him, going after, and bearing his cross*: it supposes (as our Saviour also teaches us) that a man hath cast up with himself the gain and loss he is like to receive by the bargain, and

Rom. x. 6.
Acts viii. 37.
Heb. x. 22, 23. vi. 11, 12.
1 Thes. i. 5.
Col. i. 23. ii. 5. 7. iv. 12.
2 Cor. viii. 7.
Matt. viii. 26. xiv. 31.
Matt. xiii. 20.
John xii. 42.
Acts viii. 12, 21.
Acts xxvi. 28.
Matt. x. 38. xi. 29.
Luke ix. 22. xiv. 26, 27. xvi. 24.
Matt. xiii. 44, 45.
Luke xiv. 28, 31.

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being satisfied therein, to contract *bona fide* with God; that a man hath weighed all the pains and dangers he shall be put upon by entering into this warfare, and so resolvedly to adventure upon it; it is productive of *love to the truth*, yea of love to God, and charity to men, without which all faith is unprofitable and ineffectual, as St. Paul teaches us. In short, this faith is nothing else but a true, serious, resolute embracing Christianity; not only being persuaded that all the doctrines of Christ are true, but submitting to his will and command in all things [c].

2 Thess. ii. 10. (1 Cor. xiii. 2. Gal. v. 6.)

But to prevent mistakes, and remove objections, I shall yet further observe,

That this faith hath, although not an adequate, yet a peculiar respect unto that part of Christian truth, which concerns the merciful intentions of God toward mankind, and the gracious performances of our Saviour in order to the accomplishing them; the promises of pardon to our sins, and restoral into God's favour upon the terms propounded in the Gospel, of sincere faith and repentance; whence the Gospel is called λόγος καταλλαγῆς, (*the word of reconciliation*;) and this is expressed as a summary of the apostolic ministry or message; that *God was in Christ reconciling the world, not imputing their sins*: and this our Saviour did order in especial manner to be preached in his name; this accordingly they did mainly propound and inculcate; that God had exalted *Jesus to his right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins; that he should receive remission of sins, whoever did believe in his name: Let it be known unto you, brethren, that by this man remission of sins is * denounced unto you*; (so did they preach.) Whence this faith is (*signanter*) called *belief in the blood of Christ*: indeed, of all Christian doctrines, this is most proper first to be propounded and persuaded, as the most attractive to the belief of the rest; most encouraging and comfortable to men; most apt to procure glory to God by the illustration

2 Cor. v. 18, 19.
Luke xxiv. 47.
Acts v. 31.
Acts x. 43.
Acts xiii. 38.
* καταγγέλλεται.
Rom. iii. 25.
Rom. iii. 26. xv. 9. Eph. i. 6.

[c] Credere se in Christum quomodo dicit, qui non facit quod Christus fieri praecepit? *Cypr. de Un. Ec.*

of his principal attributes, his justice and his goodness; most suitable to the state of things between God and man; for men being in a state of rebellion and enmity toward God, in order to their reducement and recovery thence, it was most proper, that in the first place an overture of mercy and pardon should be made, an act of oblivion should be passed and propounded to them: yet are not these propositions and promises the adequate or entire object of this faith; for other articles of faith are often propounded in a collateral order with those; yea sometimes (as in the case of the Eunuch) others are expressed, when that is not mentioned, but only understood: neither if any one should believe all the doctrines of that kind, if he did not withal believe that Jesus is his Lord, and shall be his Judge; that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, and a judgment to come, with the like fundamental verities of our religion, would he be a believer in this sense.

Acts viii. 37. Rom. x. 9.

7. I observe farther, that this faith doth relate only to propositions revealed by God [d], (or at least deduced from principles of reason, such as are, that there is a God; that God is good, veracious, and faithful; that our religion is true in the gross; that the holy Scriptures were written by Divine inspiration; which propositions we believe upon rational grounds and motives,) not unto other propositions concerning particular matter of fact, subject to private conscience or experience; nor to any conclusions depending upon such propositions. For instance, it is a part of this faith, to believe that God is merciful and gracious, that he bears good-will unto, and is disposed to pardon, every penitent sinner; or (which is all one) that supposing a man doth believe, and hath repented, God doth actually love him, and doth forgive his sins; this is, I say, indeed a part of the faith we speak of, its object being part of the Gospel revealed unto us: but the being persuaded that God doth love me, or hath pardoned my sins, or that

[d] Fides dicit, parata sunt magna et incomprehensibilia dona a Deo fidelibus suis: dicit spes, mihi illa bona servantur; charitas dicit, curro ego ad illa. *Bern.*

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I am in a state of favour with God, may, as my circumstances may be, not be my duty; however it is no part of this faith, but a matter of opinion, dependent upon private experience: for such a persuasion must be grounded upon my being conscious to myself of having truly and thoroughly repented, (this being required by God, as a necessary condition toward my obtaining pardon and his favour;) of having performed which duty I may presume, when it is false, (and therefore cannot then be obliged to believe it,) and may doubt, when it is true; and that not without good reason, considering the blindness and fallibility of man's mind, and that man's *heart is deceitful above all things*, as the Prophet tells us: upon which account then a man may not be obliged to have such a persuasion. It is indeed a great fault to doubt, or distrust, on that hand which concerns God; about his goodness, his truth, his wisdom, or power: but it is not always (perhaps not commonly) blameable to question a man's own qualifications, or his own performances, whether in kind or degree they be answerable to what God requires[e]; *that* is inconsistent with true faith, but *this* not: we cannot have any good religious affections toward God, if we do not take him to be our gracious Father; but we may have in us such affections toward him, and he may be favourably disposed toward us, when we suspect ourselves to be untoward children, *unworthy* (as the prodigal son in the Gospel confessed himself) *to be called the sons of God.* The Centurion in the Gospel did confess himself *unworthy that Christ should enter under his roof:* but he declared his persuasion, that *if Christ should only speak a word, his child should be healed;* and our Saviour thereupon professes, *that he had not found so much faith in Israel.* To the blind men imploring his relief, our Saviour puts the question, *Do ye believe that I can do this? They answered, Yes, Lord:* he required no more of them; but said thereupon, *According to your faith let it be done unto you.*

Jer. xvii. 9.

Luke xv. 19.

Matt. viii. 8, 10.

Matt. ix. 28, 29. Vid. Matt. xv. 27.

[e] Qui perseveraverit usque ad finem, hic salvus erit; quicquid ante finem fuerit, gradus est, quo ad fastigium salutis ascenditur, non terminus, quo jam culminis summa teneatur, &c. *Cypr. de Unit. Eccl.* p. 259.

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and that for which Abraham the father of believers, his faith is represented so acceptable is, his firm persuasion concerning God's power; *because*, saith St. Paul, *he had a plerophory, that what was promised, God was able to perform*; by doing thus, he was a believer, and thereby *gave glory to God*, as the Apostle there adds. If we do not then distrust God, we may have faith, although we distrust ourselves. It is true (generally and absolutely speaking) we should endeavour so fully and clearly to repent, and to perform whatever God requires of us, that we may thence acquire a good hope concerning our state; we should labour, that *our hearts may not condemn us* of any presumptuous transgressing our duty, and consequently, that we may become in a manner confident of God's favour toward us: but when we have done the best we can, even when we are not conscious of any enormous fault or defect, yet we may consider with St. Paul, *that we are not thereby justified*, but abide liable to the more certain cognizance and judgment of God, *who seeth not as man seeth*; that we are not capable, or competent judges of ourselves; nor are ever the better for thinking well of ourselves; since, as St. Paul tells us again, *he is not approved that commends himself, but whom the Lord commendeth*: for that, *delicta sua quis intelligit? who can thoroughly understand and scan his own errors? Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am purged of my sin?* Who can know, (if the Psalmist implieth that he could not,) until God hath searched him, and discovers it, *whether there be any secret way of wickedness in him*; whether he be sufficiently grieved for having offended God, fully humbled under the sense of his sins, thoroughly resolved to amend his life? However, it often happens that true faith and sincere repentance are in degree very defective; in which case we may, without prejudicing the truth of our faith, suspect the worst; yea, I conceive it is more safe and commendable so to do [f]: if in any, then chiefly, I suppose, in this most important and critical affair, the

Rom. iv. 21, 11. Heb. xi. 19. πληροφορηθείς. Rom. iv. 21.

Col. i. 23. Heb. iii. 6. 1 John iii. 21.

1 Cor. iv. 4.

1 Sam. xvi. 7.

2 Cor. x. 18.

Ps. xix. 12. Prov. xx. 9.

Ps. cxxxix. 24.

Μὴ ὑψηλοφρόνει, ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ. Rom. xi. 20.

[f] Nunquam est de salute propria mens secura sapientis. *Salv. ad Eccl. Cath.* lib. ii.

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ture previous and prerequisite thereto; it is therefore required before baptism, in which remission of sins is conferred: God justifies, accepts, and pardons him, that has been impious, but not him that is an infidel. This is the method plainly declared in Scripture; wherefore if faith implies a persuasion that God hath remitted our sins, it must imply an antecedent faith, (even a justifying faith antecedent to itself,) or that we believe before we believe, and are justified before we are justified. I add, that by this notion many, or most (I will not, after the council of Trent, say all) humble and modest Christians are excluded from being believers; even all those who are not confident of their own sincerity and sanctity, and consequently cannot be assured of their standing in God's favour: and on the other side, the most presumptuous and fanatical sort of people are most certainly the truest and strongest believers, as most partaking of the most essential property thereof, according to that notion; for of all men living such are wont to be most assured of God's especial love unto them, and confident that their sins are pardoned: experience sufficiently shews this to be true, and consequently that such a notion of faith cannot be good.

Much less is that notion of faith right, which defines faith to be a firm and certain knowledge of God's eternal good-will toward us particularly, and that we shall be saved [i]; which notion (taught in the beginning of the Reformation, by a man of greatest name and authority) was thus lately expressed by the Professors of Leyden in their *Synopsis purioris Theologiæ:* [k] *Faith* (they say in their definition thereof) *is a firm assent—by which every be-*

[i] *Calv. Inst.* lib. vii. §. 7. et 28. compar. Nunc justa fidei definitio nobis constabit, si dicamus esse divinæ erga nos benevolentiæ firmam certamque cognitionem, &c.

Jam in divina benevolentia quam respicere dicitur fides, intelligimus salutis ac vitæ æternæ possessionem obtineri, &c.

[k] —firmus assensus—quo certa fiducia in Deo acquiescens firmiter unusquisque fidelis statuit, non solum promissum esse credentibus in genere remissionem peccatorum, sed sibi in particulari concessum, æternamque justitiam, et ex ea vitam, &c.

with a certain trust resting in God, is persuaded not
it remission of sins is in general promised to them
lieve, but is granted to himself particularly, and
righteousness, and from it life, by the mercy of God,
Which notion seems to be very uncomfortable, as
g every man from the company of believers, who
:r ignorant or doubtful, not only concerning his
, but his final state; who hath not, not only a good
, but a certain knowledge of his present sincerity
ctity; yea, not only of this, but of his future con-
:rseverance therein: so that if a man be not sure he
:pented, he is (according to this notion) sure that
h not repented, and is no believer. How many
eople must this doctrine discourage and perplex!
nove it, we may consider, 1. that it altogether in-
nd confounds the order of things declared in Scrip-
'herein faith (as we observed before) is set before
ng God's good-will, as a prerequisite condition
); and is made a means of salvation, (*without faith*
mpossible to please God: By grace we are saved,
h faith.) And if we must believe before God loves
ith such a love as we speak of,) and before we can
ed; then must we know that we believe, before we
now that God loves us, or that we shall be saved;
onsequently we must indeed believe before we can
that God loves us, or that we shall be saved. But
octrine makes the knowledge of God's love and of
on in nature antecedent to faith, as being an essential
ient into it; which is preposterous. Consider this
of discourse: a man cannot know that he believes,
ut he does believe; this is certain: a man cannot
that he shall be saved, without knowing he doth
e; this is also certain: for upon what ground, from
evidence can he know his salvation, but by knowing
th? But again backward: a man, say they, cannot
e (and consequently not know that he believes)
ut being assured of his salvation. What an inextri-
maze and confusion is here! This doctrine indeed
make the knowledge of a future event to be the

Heb. xi. 6.
Eph. ii. 8.
Rom. v. 9.

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cause of its being future; it supposes God to become our friend (as Abraham was by his faith) by our knowing that he is our friend; it makes us to obtain a reward by knowing that we shall obtain it; it supposes the assurance of our coming to a journey's end, to be the way of getting thither; which who can conceive intelligible, or true? Our Saviour doth indeed tell us, that it is *the way to life* everlasting (or conducible to the attaining it) to *know* (that is, to believe, as it is interpreted in the 8th verse of that chapter; for what upon good grounds we are persuaded of, or judge true, we may be said to know) *the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent:* but he doth not say, it is life everlasting (or conducible to the obtaining it) to know, that we shall have life everlasting; that were somewhat strange to say. St. Peter exhorts us to *use diligence to make our calling and election sure,* (or firm, and stable:) but he doth not bid us know it to be sure. If we did know it to be so, what need should we have to make it so? yea, how could we make it so? He doth not enjoin us to be sure of it in our opinion, but to secure it in the event by sincere obedience, and a holy life; by so impressing this persuasion upon our minds, so rooting the love of God and his truth in our hearts, that no temptation may be able to subvert our faith, or to pluck out our charity.

James ii. 23.

John xvii. 3, 8.

2 Pet. i. 10.

2. This notion plainly supposes the truth of that doctrine, that no man being once in God's favour, can ever quite lose it; the truth of which I shall not contest now, (nor allege the many clear passages of Scripture, nor the whole tenor of the Gospel, nor the unanimous consent of all Christendom for fifteen hundred years against it,) but shall only take notice, that their notion of faith necessarily presupposing the truth of this doctrine, is yet thereby everted: for it follows thence, that no man, who doth not assent to that doctrine, is, or can be a believer: for he that is not assured of the truth of that opinion (although we suppose him assured of his present sincerity, and being in a state of grace) cannot know that he shall be saved: so that only such as agree with them in that opinion can

believers, which is ſomewhat hard, or rather very ab-
d. And to aggravate this inconvenience, I adjoin, 3.
it, according to their notion, ſcarce any man, (except
ne have had an eſpecial revelation concerning their ſal-
tion,) before the late alterations in Chriſtendom, was a
liever; for before that time it hardly appears, that any
an did believe, as they do, that a man cannot fall from
ace; and therefore ſcarce any man could be aſſured,
at he ſhould be ſaved; and therefore ſcarce any man
ould be a believer in their ſenſe.

St. Auguſtine himſelf (whoſe ſuppoſed patronage ſtands
em in ſo much ſtead upon other occaſions) hath often
firmed, that divers have had given them that faith, that
arity, that juſtification, wherein if they had died, they
ould have been ſaved; who yet were not ſaved: which
erſons ſurely, when they were in that good ſtate, (ad-
itting them, according to St. Auguſtine's ſuppoſal, to
ave been in it,) were as capable of knowing their ſalva-
on, as any other man can be; yea, St. Auguſtine him-
lf (conſidering that *accidere cuiquam quod poteſt, cuivis
oteſt*, what was another man's caſe might be his, there
eing no ground of difference) could not be more ſure of
is own ſalvation at any time, than ſuch perſons were at
hat time: according to St. Auguſtine's judgment there-
ore, no man could know that he ſhould be ſaved, (his
alvation depending upon perſeverance, which in his opi-
ion not being given to all, muſt as to our knowledge,
whatever it might be in reſpect to God's decree, be con-
ingent and uncertain)—it follows, I ſay, upon his ſuppo-
itions, yea he expreſsly affirms it; lib. ii. de bono Perſ.
ſque, ſays he, *utrum quiſque hoc (perſeverantiæ) munus
ceperit, quamdiu hanc vitam ducit, incertum eſt: Whether
ny have received this gift of perſeverance while he leads
his life, is uncertain.* [k] Wherefore St. Auguſtine could

De Corr. et Gr. cap. 9. et 13.
De bon. Perſev. cap. viii. 13.

[k] —nec ſibi quiſque ita notus eſt, ut ſit de ſua craſtina converſatione ſe-
rus. *Aug. Ep.* 121. *ad Probam.*
In hoc mundo, et in hac vita nulla anima poſſit eſſe ſecura. *Ibid.*
Quamdiu vivimus, in certamine ſumus, et quamdiu in certamine, nulla
rta eſt victoria. *Hier. adv. Pelag.* ii. 2.

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not be assured of his own salvation; and therefore (according to these men's sense) he was no believer, no Christian; which I suppose yet they will not assert, though it be so plainly consequent on their own position. I might, 4. ask of them, if a man should confess ingenuously, that although he did hope for mercy from God in that day, yet that he was not assured of his salvation, whether such a person should be rejected from Christian communion, as no believer. It seems, according to their notion of faith, he should; since by his own (in this particular infallible) judgment, it is notorious that he, as being no believer, hath no title unto, or interest in, the privileges of Christianity: but this proceeding would very much depopulate the Church, and banish from it, I fear, the best (the most humble and modest, yea the wisest and soberest) members thereof.

But so much I think suffices for the removal of that new harsh notion, to say no worse of it.

Vid. Ames. Med. lib. i. cap. 27. Christus adæquatum objectum. *Ames.*

There is another more new than that, devised by some, (who perceived the inconveniences of the former notions, yet, it seems, did affect to substitute some new fine one in their room,) which if it be not so plainly false, yet is, it seems, more obscure and intricate: it is this; that faith is not an assent to propositions of any kind, but a recumbency, leaning, resting, rolling upon, adherency to (for they express themselves in these several terms, and others like them) the person of Christ; or, an apprehending and applying to ourselves the righteousness of Christ; his person itself, and his righteousness, as simple incomplex things; not any proposition (that they expressly caution against) are the objects, say they, of our faith: they compare our faith to a hand that lays hold upon Christ, and applies his righteousness; and to an eye that looks upon him, and makes him present to us; and by looking on him (as on the brazen serpent) cures us. But this notion is so intricate, these phrases are so unintelligible, that I scarce believe the devisers of them did themselves know what they meant by them; I do not, I am sure: for what it is for one body to lean upon, or to be rolled on

r; what for one body to reach at, and lay hold
nother; what it is to apply a garment to one's
or a salve to one's wounds, I can easily understand:
at it is for a man's mind to lean upon a person,
wise than by assenting unto some proposition he
or relying upon some promise he makes,) to apply
, otherwise than by consenting to some proposition
ning that thing, I cannot apprehend, or reach;
not, as we noted before, any faculty or operation
an's mind, which answers the intent of such notions
ses. Let me put this case: Suppose a great pro-
ad generally revolted from its sovereign, whereby
ople thereof had all deserved extreme punishment
to such an offence; but that the king, moved
ity, and upon the intercession of his only beloved
ogether with a satisfaction offered and performed
n,) should resolve to grant a general pardon to
upon just, and fit, and withal very easy terms; and
or the execution of this gracious purpose toward
ne should depute and send his son himself among
o treat with them, by him declaring his merciful
ons toward them, with the conditions, upon com-
wherewith, all, or any of them, should be par-
their offence, and received into favour; those con-
being, suppose it, that first they should receive and
vledge his son for such as he professed himself to
e king's son indeed, who truly brought such a mes-
nto them from his majesty;) then that they should
y resolve with themselves, and solemnly engage to
unto their due allegiance; undertaking faithfully
r after to observe those laws, which the said prince
father's name should propound unto them. Sup-
rther, that the prince in pursuance of this commis-
d design, being come into the country, should there
l about officers of his, enjoining them to discover
ent of his coming, what he offered, and upon what
withal, empowering them in his name to receive
who complied, into favour, declaring them par-

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doned of all their offences, and restored to the benefit of the king's protection, and all the privileges of loyal subjects: suppose now, that these officers should go to the people, and speak to them in this manner: The king makes an overture of pardon and favour unto you, upon condition, that any one of you will recumb, rest, lean upon, or roll himself upon the person of his son, (rest upon his person, not only rely upon his word, that you are to understand,) or in case you will lay hold upon and apply to yourselves his son's righteousness, by which he hath procured of the king his father this mercy and favour for you, (not only being persuaded that he hath performed thus much for you, this is not enough;) do you think these messengers should thus well express themselves, or perform their message handsomely and with advantage? Should not they do much better, laying aside such words of metaphor and mystery, to speak in plain language; telling them, that their king's son (by plain characters discernible to be truly such) was come among them upon such an intention; that if they would acknowledge him, and undertake thereafter to obey him, they should receive a full pardon, with divers other great favours and advantages thereby? The case is apparently so like to that which stands between God and man, and doth so fully resemble the nature of the evangelical dispensation, that I need not make any application, or use any more argument to refute that notion: I shall only say, that I conceive these new phrases, for such they are, not known to ancient Christians, nor delivered, either in terms or sense, in Scripture; for the places alleged in favour or proof of them by Ames, one of the first broachers of them, (all, we may presume, that they could find anywise seeming to favour their notion,) do not, as, if time would permit, might easily be shewed, import any such thing, but are strangely misapplied—that, I say, these phrases do much obscure the nature of this great duty, and make the state of things in the Gospel more difficult and dark than it truly is; and thereby seem to be of bad conse-

quence, being apt to beget in people both dangerous presumptions and sad perplexities: for they hearing that they are only, or mainly bound to have such a recumbency upon Christ, or to make such an application of his righteousness, they begin (accordingly as they take themselves to be directed) to work their minds to it; and when they have hit upon that posture of fancy, which they guess to suit their teachers' meaning, then they become satisfied, and conceit they believe well, although perhaps they be ignorant of the principles of the Christian faith, and indisposed to obey the precepts of our Lord. Sometimes, on the other side, although they well understand, and are persuaded concerning the truth of all necessary Christian doctrines, and are well disposed to observe God's commandments, yet because they cannot tell whether they apprehend Christ's person dexterously, or apply to themselves his righteousness in the right manner, as is prescribed to them, (of which it is no wonder that they should doubt, since it is so hard to know what the doing so means,) they become disturbed and perplexed in their minds; questioning whether they do believe or no. Thus by these notions (or phrases rather) are some men tempted fondly to presume, and other good people are wofully discouraged by them; both being thence diverted, or withdrawn from their duty: whereas what it is to believe, as Christians anciently did understand it, and as we have assayed to explain it, is very easy to conceive; and the taking it so, can have no other than very good influence upon practice, as both reason (as we have insinuated) shews, and the Scripture largely and plainly affirms. But let thus much suffice for the inquiry concerning the genuine nature and notion of faith proper to this place, (that faith by which in this text we are said to be justified:) the other particulars I cannot so much as touch upon at this time.

I end with those good prayers of our Church:

O Lord, from whom all good things do come, grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good; and by thy merciful 5th Sunday after Easter.

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14th Sunday after Trinity.

Almighty and everlasting Lord, give unto us the increa of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain th which thou dost promise, make us to love that which th dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON V.

OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

ROM. V. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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IN order to the understanding of these words, I did formerly propound divers particulars to be considered and discussed: the first was, What that Faith is, by which Christians are said to be justified? This I have dispatched: the next is, What Justification doth import? The which I shall now endeavour to explain; and I am concerned to perform it with the more care and diligence, because the right notion of this term hath in latter times been canvassed with so much vehemence of dissension and strife.

In former times, among the Fathers and the Schoolmen, there doth not appear to have been any difference or debate about it; because, as it seems, men commonly having the same apprehensions about the matters, to which the word is applicable, did not so much examine or regard the strict propriety of expression concerning them: consenting in *things*, they did not fall to cavil and contend about the exact meaning of *words*. They did in-

περὶ λέξεων μικρολογεῖν. Naz.

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deed conſider diſtinctly no ſuch point of doctrine as that of *juſtification*, looking upon that word as uſed incidentally in ſome places of Scripture, for expreſſion of points more clearly expreſſed in other terms; wherefore they do not make much of the *word*, as ſome *divines* now do.

But in the beginning of the Reformation, when the diſcovery of ſome great errors (from the corruption and ignorance of former times) crept into vogue, rendered all things the ſubjects of contention, and multiplied controverſies, there did ariſe hot diſputes about this point; and the right ſtating thereof ſeemed a matter of great importance; nor ſcarce was any controverſy proſecuted with greater zeal and earneſtneſs: whereas yet (ſo far as I can diſcern) about the real points of doctrine, whereto this word, according to any ſenſe pretended, may relate, there hardly doth appear any material difference; and all the queſtions depending, chiefly ſeem to conſiſt about the manner of expreſſing things, which all agree in; or about the extent of the ſignification of words capable of larger or ſtricter acception: whence the debates about this point, among all ſober and intelligent perſons, might, as I conceive, eaſily be reſolved or appeaſed, if men had a mind to agree, and did not love to wrangle; if at leaſt a conſent in believing the ſame things, although under ſome difference of expreſſion, would content them, ſo as to forbear ſtrife.

Articulus ſtantis et cadentis Eccleſiæ. *Luth.*

To make good which obſervation, tending as well to the illuſtration of the whole matter, as to the ſtating and deciſion of the controverſies about it, let us conſider the ſeveral Divine acts, to which the term Juſtification is, according to any ſenſe pretended, applicable: I ſay Divine acts; for that the Juſtification we treat of is an act of God ſimple or compound (in ſome manner) reſpecting, or terminated upon man, is evident, and will not, I ſuppoſe, be conteſted; the words of St. Paul in ſeveral places ſo clearly declaring it; as in that, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth* and in that, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for right*

Rom. viii. 33.

Rom. iv. 5. iii. 26.

eouſneſs. Now according to the tenor of Chriſtian doctrine ſuch acts are theſe. SERM. V.

1. God (in regard to the obedience performed to his will by his beloved Son, and to his interceſſion) is ſo reconciled to mankind, that unto every perſon, who doth ſincerely believe the Goſpel, and, repenting of his former bad life, doth ſeriouſly reſolve thereafter to live according to it, he doth (upon the ſolemn obſignation of that faith, and profeſſion of that reſolution in baptiſm) entirely remit all paſt offences, accepting his perſon, receiving him into favour; aſſuming him into the ſtate of a loyal ſubject, a faithful ſervant, a dutiful ſon; and beſtowing on him all the benefits and privileges ſuitable to ſuch a ſtate; according to thoſe paſſages: *It behoved Chriſt to ſuffer—— and that repentance and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached in his name among all nations: Then Peter ſaid unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins;* and, *To him give all the Prophets witneſs, that through his name whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins;* and, *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their ſins*; and in other places innumerable. Luke xxiv. 46, 47. Acts ii. 38. iii. 19. v. 31. Acts x. 43. 2 Cor. v. 19. Rom. iii. 24, 25.

2. As any perſon perſiſting in that ſincere faith, and ſerious purpoſe of obedience, doth aſſuredly continue in that ſtate of grace, and exemption from the guilt of ſin; ſo in caſe that, out of human frailty, ſuch a perſon doth fall into the commiſſion of ſin, God (in regard to the ſame performances and interceſſions of his Son) doth, upon the confeſſion and repentance of ſuch a perſon, remit his ſin, and retain him in or reſtore him to favour; according to thoſe ſayings of St. John, *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs:* and, *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.* 1 John i. 9. 1 John ii. 1.

3. To each perſon ſincerely embracing the Goſpel, and continuing in ſteadfaſt adherence thereto, God doth afford his Holy Spirit, as a principle productive of all inward ſanctity and virtuous diſpoſitions in his heart, enabling alſo and quickening him to diſcharge the conditions of

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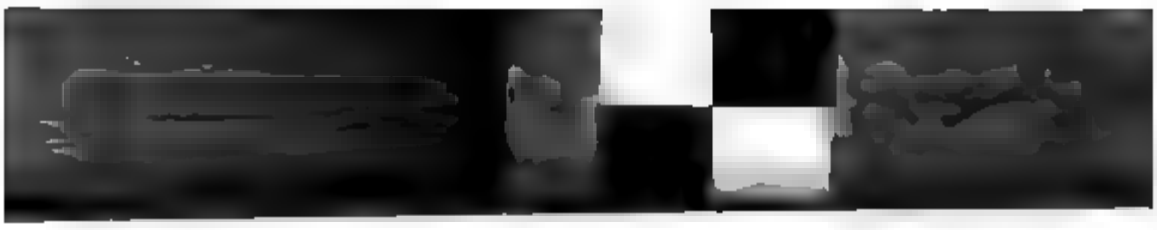
Rom. viii. 14. Gal. iv. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 7. Acts ii. 38 Rom. viii. 9. Tit. iii. 5. (Eph. ii. 22.) Eph. ii. 10. iv. 23.

faith and obedience required from him, and undertaken by him; that which is by some termed making a person just, infusion into his soul of righteousness, of grace, of virtuous habits; in the Scripture style it is called *acting by the Spirit, bestowing the gift of the Holy Ghost, renovation of the Holy Ghost, creation to good works, sanctification by the Spirit*, &c. which phrases denote partly the collation of a principle enabling to perform good works, partly the design of religion tending to that performance.

Now all these acts (as by the general consent of Christians, and according to the sense of the ancient Catholic Church, so) by all considerable parties seeming to dissent, and so earnestly disputing about the point of justification, are acknowledged and ascribed unto God; but with which of them the act of justification is solely or chiefly coincident; whether it signifieth barely some one of them, or extendeth to more of them, or comprehendeth them all, (according to the constant meaning of the word in Scripture,) are questions coming under debate, and so eagerly prosecuted: of which questions whatever the true resolution be, it cannot methinks be of so great consequence, as to cause any great anger or animosity in Dissenters one toward another, seeing they all conspire in avowing the acts, whatever they be, meant by the word *Justification*, although in other terms; seeing all the dispute is about the precise and adequate notion of the word *Justification:* whence those questions might well be waved as unnecessary grounds of contention; and it might suffice to understand the points of doctrine which it relateth to in other terms, laying that aside as ambiguous and litigious. Yet because the understanding the righteest, or most probable notion of the word, may somewhat conduce to the interpretation of the Scriptures, and to clearing the matters couched in it, somewhat also to the satisfaction of persons considerate and peaceable, I shall employ some care faithfully (without partiality to any side) to search it out, and declare it: in order whereto I shall propound some observations, seeming material.

I. Whereas it were not hard to speak much, and criti-



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out the primitive ſenſe of the word, and about its s acceptions both in holy Scripture and other writ- I do queſtion whether doing that would be pertinent ducible to our purpoſe of underſtanding its right here: for knowing the primitive ſenſe of words ldom or never determine their meaning any where, often in common uſe declining from it; and the ing variety of acceptions doth at moſt yield only the tage of choofing one ſuitable to the ſubjacent mat- d occaſion. We are not therefore to learn the ſenſe word from mere Grammarians.

Verba valent ut nummi.

The ſenſe of this word is not to be ſearched in ex- ns writers; both becauſe no matter like to that we pon did ever come into their uſe or conſideration, ecauſe they do ſeldom or never uſe the word in a anywiſe congruous to this matter: in them moſt nonly the word δικαιόω doth ſignify (as the like word to deem a thing juſt, equal, or fit, (or ſimply to about a thing.) Sometimes alſo, yet not often as it, being applied to an action, or cauſe, it importeth ake it appear lawful, or juſt, as when we ordinarily o juſtify what one ſaith or doth, (whence δικαίωμα in tle is an argument proving the juſtice of a cauſe, *mentum cauſæ*;) but in them very ſeldom or never pplied to perſons; and an example, I conceive, can y be produced, wherein it is ſo uſed.

Ἐδικαίωσε, ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐδίκασε Ἰησοῦς. *Baſil. in Syn. Chalced. Can.* 1.

. In the ſacred Writings at large it is commonly ed to perſons, and that according to various ſenſes, more wide and general, ſome more reſtrained and ular. It there ſometime denoteth generally to ex- any judicial act upon, in regard unto, or in be- f a perſon; to do him right, or juſtice, in declaring merit of his cauſe, or pronouncing ſentence about in acquitting or condemning him for any cauſe, in ing him to, or exempting him from any burden, in afing to him any reward or puniſhment, indifferently: Abſalom ſaid, *O that I were made a judge in the that every man, which hath any ſuit or cauſe, might unto me,* והצדקתיו *καὶ δικαιώσω αὐτὸν, and I would*

2 Sam. xv. 4.

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juſtify him, that is, *I would do him right:* and in the 82 Pſalm, this charge is given to the princes, or judges; *D*
Pſ. lxxxii. 3. *fend the poor and fatherleſs,* הַצְדִּיקוּ δικαιώσατε, *juſtify th poor and needy;* that is, do right and juſtice to them.

But more particularly the word ſignifieth (and that ac cording to the moſt uſual and current acception) ſo to d a man right, as to pronounce ſentence in his favour, as t acquit him from guilt, to excuſe him from burden, t free him from puniſhment; whence we moſt often mee with the word placed in direct oppoſition to that of con-
Deut. xxv. 1. demnation: as in that law, *If there be a controverſy be tween men, and they come unto judgment, that the judge may judge them, then they ſhall juſtify the righteous, an*
1 Kings viii. 32. *condemn the wicked:* and in Solomon's prayer, *Then hea*
2 Chr. vi. 23. *thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy ſervants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and juſtifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteouſneſs.*
Prov. xvii. 15. and in the Proverbs, *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt, even both are an abomination unto*
Matt. xii. 37. (Cf. v. 23. xliii. 9.) *the Lord:* and in the Goſpel our Saviour ſaith, *By thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned.*

In conſequence upon this ſenſe, and with a little deflection from it, to juſtify a perſon ſometime denoteth to approve him, or eſteem him juſt, a mental judgment, as it
Matt. xi. 19. were, being paſſed upon him: ſo *Wiſdom* is ſaid to be *juſtified*, that is, approved, *by her children:* ſo in the Goſ-
Luke x. 29. xvi. 15. xviii. 14. pel ſome perſons are ſaid to *juſtify themſelves*, that is, to conceit themſelves righteous: and the *Publican went home juſtified rather than the Phariſee*, that is, more ap-
Luke vii. 29. proved and accepted by God: ſo alſo it is ſaid, that *all the people and the publicans juſtified God, being baptized with John's baptiſm:* they juſtified God, that is, they declared their approbation of God's proceeding, in the miſſion of John.

In like manner, Juſtification is taken for exemption
Acts xiii. 39. from burdens; as where in the Acts St. Paul ſaith, *And from all things, from which by the law of Moſes ye could not be juſtified, in this is every one that believeth juſtified.*

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ay also sometimes be taken for deliverance from
nent; as where in the Law God saith, *The innocent*
ghteous slay thou not; for I will not justify the
; that is, not let him escape with impunity; ac-
; to that in the Proverbs, *Though hand join in hand,*
ked shall not go unpunished.

Exod. xxiii. 7.

We may observe, that (as every man hath some
and particular forms of speech, in which he de-
h, so) this term is somewhat peculiar to St. Paul,
rdly by the other Apostles applied to that matter,
he expresseth thereby: they usually in their Ser-
and Epistles do speak the same thing, whatever it
other terms more immediately expressive of the
. St. James indeed doth use it, but not so much,
ieth, according to his usual manner of speech, as
nally, to refute the false and pestilent conceits of
persons, who mistaking St. Paul's expressions and
ie, did pervert them to the maintenance of Soli-
Eunomian, and Antinomian positions, greatly pre-
l to good practice. And seeing the term is so pro-
St. Paul in relation to this matter, the right sense
tion thereof seemeth best derivable from consider-
e nature of the subject he treateth on, observing the
f his discourse and manner of his reasoning, com-
the other phrases he useth equivalent to this, and
retative of his meaning.

Acts xiii. 88. ii. 38. iii. 19. v. 31. x. 43. xxii. 16. Luke xxiv. 47.

Following this method of inquiry, I do observe and
that the last notion of the word, as it is evidently
ifual in the Scripture, so it best suiteth to the mean-
St. Paul here, and otherwhere commonly, where he
th upon the same matters; that God's justifying
, or chiefly, doth import his acquitting us from

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which I take to be this; the aſſerting the neceſſity, reaſonableneſs, ſufficiency, and excellency of the Chriſtian diſpenſation; in order to that, which is the end of all religion, the bringing men to happineſs, and conſequently to the rendering men acceptable to God Almighty, who is the ſole Author and Donor of happineſs: this is that which in general he aimeth to aſſert and maintain.

This, I ſay, is that which he chiefly driveth at, to maintain, that it is not unreaſonable that God ſhould ſo proceed with men (whoſe good and felicity, as their gracious Maker, he greatly tendereth) as the Chriſtian Goſpel declareth him to do, but that rather ſuch proceeding was neceſſary and fit, in order to our ſalvation; and withal conformable to the ordinary method of God's proceedings toward the ſame purpoſe.

Now God's proceeding with man according to the Goſpel, the general tenor thereof doth ſet out to be this, that God out of his infinite goodneſs and mercy, in conſideration of what his beloved Son, our bleſſed Lord, hath performed and ſuffered, in obedience to his will, and for the redemption of mankind, (which by tranſgreſſion of his laws, and defailance in duty toward him, had grievouſly offended him and fallen from his favour, was involved in guilt, and ſtood obnoxious to puniſhment,) is become reconciled to them, (paſſing by and fully pardoning all offences by them committed againſt him,) ſo as generally to proffer mercy, upon certain reaſonable and gentle terms, to all that ſhall ſincerely embrace ſuch overtures of mercy, and heartily reſolve to comply with thoſe terms required by him; namely, the returning and adhering to him, forſaking all impiety and iniquity, conſtantly perſiſting in faithful obedience to his holy commandments; this, I ſay, is the proceeding of God, which the Chriſtian Goſpel doth eſpecially hold forth, and which, according to our Lord's commiſſion and command, the Apoſtles did firſt preach to men; as whoſoever will conſider the drift and tenor of their preaching, will eaſily diſcern; which therefore St. Paul may reaſonably be ſuppoſed here to aſſert and vindicate againſt the Jews, and

Luke xxiv. 47.

er adversaries of the Gospel: consequently the terms useth should be so interpreted as to express that mat-r; whence being justified, will imply that which a per-n embracing the Gospel doth immediately receive from od, in that way of grace and mercy, viz. an absolution om his former crimes, an acquittance from his debts, a ate of innocence and guiltlessness in God's sight, an ex-mption from vengeance and punishment; all that which y him sometimes, and by the other Apostles, is couched nder the phrases of *remission of sins*, having sins *blotted* Acts xiii. 38. xxii. 16. ii. 38. iii. 19. v. 31. 1 John i. 7. *t* and *washed away*, being *cleansed from sin*; and the ke: thus considering the nature of the matter, and design f his discourse, would incline us to understand this word.

2. Again, the manner of his prosecuting his discourse, nd the arguments by which he inferreth his conclusions oncerning the Gospel, do confirm this notion. He dis-ourseth, and proveth at large, that all mankind, both lews and Gentiles, were *shut up under sin*, that *all had* Rom. iii. 9. xi. 32. iii. 19, 23. Gal. iii. 22. *sinned, and did fall short of the glory of God*, (that is, of endering him his due glory by dutiful obedience,) that *every mouth was stopped*, having nothing to say in defence of their transgressions, and *that all the world stood obnoxi-ous to* the severity of *God's judgments*; that not only the ὑπόχρεως—ὑπόδικος. light of nature was insufficient to preserve men from of-fending inexcusably, even according to the verdict of their Rom. viii. 3. own consciences, but that the written Law of God had Gal. iii. 21. (to manifold experience) proved ineffectual to that purpose, Rom. iv. 15. iii. 20. vii. 7. serving rather *to work wrath*, to bring men under a curse, to aggravate their guilt, to convince them of their sinful-Gal. ii. 16, 20. ness, to discourage and perplex them; upon which gene-Rom. v. 20. vii. 8. ral state of men (so implicated in guilt, so liable to wrath) is consequent a necessity either of condemnation and pu-nishment, or of mercy and pardon.

He doth also imply (that which in the Epistle to the Galatians, where he prosecuteth the same argument, is more expressly delivered) that no precedent dispensation had exhibited any manifest overture, or promise of pardon; for the light of nature doth only direct unto duty, con-demning every man in his own judgment and conscience,

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who transgresseth it; but as to pardon in case of transgression, it is blind and silent; and the Law of Moses rigorously exacteth punctual obedience, denouncing in express terms a condemnation and curse to the transgressors thereof in any part; from whence he collecteth, that *no man can be justified by the works of the Law*, (*natural* or *Mosaical*; or that no precedent dispensation can justify any man,) and that *a man is justified by faith*, or hath absolute need of such a justification as that, which the Gospel declareth and tendereth; λογιζόμεθα ἄρ, *we hence*, saith he, *collect*, or argue, *that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the Law*: which justification must therefore import the receiving that free pardon, which the criminal and guilty world did stand in need of, which the forlorn and deplorable state of mankind did groan for, without which no man could have any comfort in his mind, any hope, or any capacity of salvation. If the state of man was a state of rebellion, and consequently of heinous guilt, of having forfeited God's favour, of obnoxiousness to God's wrath; then that justification, which was needful, was a dispensation of mercy, remitting that guilt, and removing those penalties.

Rom. i. 20. ii. 15. Gal. iii. 10, 12. Rom. iii. 20.

Again, St. Paul commendeth the excellency of the evangelical dispensation from hence, that it entirely doth ascribe the justification of men to God's mercy and favour, excluding any merit of man, any right or title thereto, grounded upon what man hath performed; consequently advancing the glory of God, and depressing the vanity of man; *If*, saith he, *Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to boast; for that to him who worketh, wages are not reckoned as bestowed in favour, but are paid as debt*: so it would be, if men were justified by works; they might claim to themselves the due consequences thereof, impunity and reward; they would be apt to please themselves, and boast of the effects arising from their own performances: but if, as the Gospel teacheth, *men are justified freely* (*gratis*) *by God's mercy and grace*, without any regard to what they formerly have done, either good or bad, those who have lived wickedly and

Rom. iv. 2, 4. iii. 27. Tit. iii. 5. Eph. ii. 9. Rom. xi. 6.

Rom. iii. 24.

impiously (upon their compliance with the terms proposed to them) being no less capable thereof, than the most righteous and pious persons; then *where is boasting? It is excluded;* then surely no man can assume any thing to himself, then all the glory and praise are due to God's frank goodness: the purport of which reasoning (so often used) doth imply, that a man's justification signifieth his being accepted or approved as just, standing *rectus in curia*; being in God's esteem, and, by his sentence, absolved from guilt and punishment; the which cannot otherwise be obtained, than from Divine favour declared and exhibited in the Gospel; according as St. Paul otherwhere fully speaketh: *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*

Rom. iv. 5. iii. 27. Eph. ii. 9.

Eph. i. 6, 7.

Again, St. Paul expresseth justification as an act of judgment performed by God, whereby he declareth his own righteousness, or justice; that justice consisting in acceptance of a competent satisfaction offered to him in amends for the debt due to him, and in reparation of the injury done unto him, in consequence thereof acquitting the debtor, and remitting the offence; so those words declare: *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* Justification there we see is expressed a result of Christ's redemption, and the act of God consequent thereon; so is remission of sins; God by them jointly demonstrating his justice and goodness, so that they may be well conceived the same thing diversely expressed, or having several names according to some divers formalities of respect. So in other places, sometimes justification, sometimes remission of sins are reckoned the proper and immediate effects of our Saviour's passion;

Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26.

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Being (ſaith St. Paul in the 5th to the Romans) *juſtified by his blood, we ſhall be ſaved by him from wrath;* and, *In whom* (ſaith he again in the firſt of the Epiſtle to the Epheſians) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins;* which argueth the equivalency of theſe terms.

Rom. v. 9. Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14.

So likewiſe a main point of the evangelical covenant on God's part is made juſtifying of a man by his faith, or upon it; and remiſſion of ſins upon the ſame condition, is alſo made the like principal point, which ſometime is put alone, as implying all the benefits of that covenant.

Gal. iii. *per tot.* Rom. ix. 27.

Again, juſtification is by St. Paul made the immediate conſequent, or ſpecial adjunct, of baptiſm; therein, he ſaith, we *die to ſin,* (by reſolution and engagement, to lead a new life in obedience to God's commandment,) and ſo dying we are ſaid to be juſtified from ſin, (that which otherwiſe is expreſſed, or expounded, by being freed from ſin:) now the freedom from ſin obtained in baptiſm is frequently declared to be the remiſſion of ſin then conferred, and ſolemnly confirmed by a viſible ſeal.

Rom. vi. 2. Rom. vi. 6, 7, 18, 22.

Whereas alſo ſo frequently we are ſaid to be *juſtified by faith,* and according to the general tenor of Scripture, the immediate conſequent of faith is baptiſm; therefore diſpenſing the benefits conſigned in baptiſm, is coincident with juſtification; and that diſpenſation is frequently ſignified to be the cleanſing us from ſin by entire remiſſion thereof.

Eph. v. 26. Tit. iii. 5. Acts xiii. 38. xxii. 16.

3. Farther, the ſame notion may be confirmed by comparing this term with other terms and phraſes equivalent, or oppoſite to this of juſtification.

One equivalent phraſe is imputation of righteouſneſs; *As,* ſaith St. Paul, *David ſpeaketh of that man's bleſſedneſs, unto whom God imputeth righteouſneſs without works; Bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered. Bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute ſin:* whence to him that conſiders the drift and force of St. Paul's diſcourſe, it will clearly appear, that juſtification, imputing righteouſneſs, not im-

Rom. iv. 6, 7, 8.

puting sin, and remission of sin, are the same thing; otherwise the Apostle's discourse would not signify or conclude any thing.

For confirmation of his discourse (arguing free justification by God's mercy, not for our works) St. Paul also doth allege that place in the Psalm, *For in thy sight shall no man living be justified;* the sense of which place is evidently this, that no man living, his actions being strictly tried and weighed, shall appear guiltless, or deserve to be acquitted; but shall stand in need of mercy, or can no otherwise be justified than by a special act of grace. Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16. Ps. cxliii. 2.

Again, imputing faith for righteousness is the same with justifying by faith, (*Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness:*) but that imputation is plainly nothing else but the approving him, and taking him for a righteous person in regard to his faith. Rom. iv. 3, 22. Gal. iii. 6.

Again, justification is the same with being righteous before God, as appeareth by those words: *Not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified:* but being just before God, plainly signifieth nothing else but being accepted by God, or approved to his esteem and judgment. Rom. ii. 13.

Being reconciled to God seemeth also to be the same with being justified by him; as appeareth by those words, *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life:* where πολλῷ μᾶλλον δικαιωθέντες, and πολλῷ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέντες, seem to signify the same; but that reconciliation is interpreted by remission of sins: *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* Rom. v. 9, 10. 2 Cor. v. 19.

To obtain mercy is another term signifying justification; and what doth that import but having the remission of sins in mercy bestowed on us? Rom. xi. 3, 31, 32. 1 Pet. ii. 10.

Again, justification is opposed directly to condemnation: *As,* saith he, *by the offence of one man* (judgment came) Rom. v. 16, 18.

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upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one man (the free gift came) *upon all men to justification of life;* (*justification of life*, that is, a justification so relating to life, or bestowing a promise thereof, as the condemnation opposite thereto respected death, which it threatened.) In which place St. Paul comparing the first Adam with his actions, and their consequences, to the second Adam with his performances, and what resulted from them, teacheth us, that as the transgression of the *first* did involve mankind in guilt, and brought consequently upon men a general sentence of death, (forasmuch as all men did follow him in commission of sin;) so the obedience of the *second* did absolve all men from guilt, and restored them consequently into a state of immortality, (all men, under the condition prescribed, when, as it is said, should *receive the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness* tendered to them;) the justification therefore he speaketh of doth so import an absolution from guilt and punishment, as the condemnation signifieth a being declared guilty, and adjudged to punishment.

Rom. v. 17.

Bellarm. de Justif. ii. 3. i. 1.

Bellarmine indeed (who, in answering to this place objected against his doctrine, blunders extremely, and is put to his trumps of sophistry) telleth us, that in this place, to maintain the parallel or *antithesis* between Adam and Christ, justification must signify infusion of grace, or putting into a man's soul an inherent righteousness; because Adam's sin did constitute us unjust with an inherent unrighteousness: but (with his favour) justification and condemnation being both of them the acts of God, and it being plain, that God condemning doth not infuse any inherent unrighteousness into man, neither doth he justifying, formally (if the *antithesis* must be pat) put any inherent righteousness into him; inherent unrighteousness in the former case may be a consequent of that condemnation, and inherent righteousness may be connected with this justification; but neither *that* nor *this* may formally signify those qualities respectively: as the inherent unrighteousness consequent upon Adam's sin is not included

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in God's condemning, so neither is the inherent righteousness proceeding from our Saviour's obedience contained in God's justifying men.

But however most plainly (and beyond all evasions) justification and condemnation are opposed otherwhere in this Epistle: *Who*, saith St. Paul, *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* (or criminate against them.) *It is God who justifieth; who is he that condemneth?* What can be more clear, than that there justification signifieth absolution from all guilt and blame?

Rom. viii. 33, 34. Τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ—

4. Farther, this notion may be confirmed by excluding that sense, which in opposition thereto is assigned, according to which justification is said to import, not only remission of sin, and acceptance with God, but the making a man intrinsecally righteous, by infusing into him, as they speak, a habit of grace, or charity; the putting into a man a *righteousness, by which* (as the council of Trent expresseth it) *we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not only reputed, but are called, and become truly righteous, receiving righteousness in ourselves.*

Bell. i. 3.

Justitiam in nobis recipientes.

Now admitting this to be true, as in a sense it surely is, that whoever (according to St. Paul's meaning in this Epistle) is justified, is also really at the same time endued with some measure of that intrinsic righteousness which those men speak of, (forasmuch as that faith, which is required to justification, (being a gift of God, managed by his providence, and wrought by his preventing grace,) doth include a sincere and steadfast purpose of forsaking all impiety, of amendment of life, of obedience to God, which purpose *cleanseth the heart*, and is apt to produce as well inward righteousness of heart, as outward righteousness of practice; for that also to every sound believer upon his faith is bestowed the Spirit of God, as a principle of righteousness, dwelling in him, directing, admonishing, exciting him to do well; assisting and enabling him sufficiently to the performance of those conditions, or those duties, which Christianity requireth, and the believer thereof undertaketh; which, the man's honest and diligent endeavour concurring, will surely beget the practice of all

Rom. viii. 9. 1 Cor. iii. 16. Acts ii. 38. Eph. iv. 23, 24. 2 Cor. v. 17.

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righteouſneſs, and in continuance of ſuch practice will render it habitual;)—avowing, I ſay, willingly, that ſuch a righteouſneſs doth ever accompany the juſtification St Paul ſpeaketh of, yet that ſort of righteouſneſs doth not ſeem implied by the word Juſtification, according to St Paul's intent, in thoſe places, where he diſcourſeth about juſtification by faith; for that ſuch a ſenſe of the word doth not well conſiſt with the drift and efficacy of his reaſoning, nor with divers paſſages in his diſcourſe. For,

1. Whereas St. Paul, from the general depravation of manners in all men, both Jews and Gentiles, argueth the neceſſity of ſuch a juſtification, as the Chriſtian Goſpel declareth and exhibiteth, if we ſhould take juſtification for infuſing an inherent quality of righteouſneſs into men, by the like diſcourſe we might infer the imperfection and inſufficiency of Chriſtianity itſelf, and conſequently the neceſſity of another diſpenſation beſide it; for that even all Chriſtians, as St. James ſaith, do offend often, and commiſſion of ſin doth alſo much reign among them; ſo that St. Paul's diſcourſe (juſtification being taken in this ſenſe) might ſtrongly be retorted againſt himſelf.

James iii. 2.

2. Suppoſing that ſenſe of juſtification, a Jew might eaſily invalidate St. Paul's ratiocination, by ſaying, that even their religion did plainly enough declare ſuch a juſtification, which God did beſtow upon all good men in their way, as by their frequent acknowledgments and devotions is apparent; ſuch as thoſe of the Pſalmiſt: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, renew a right ſpirit within me. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; incline my heart unto thy teſtimonies.* Which ſort of prayers God hearing did infuſe righteouſneſs, and juſtified thoſe perſons in this ſenſe; ſo that Chriſtianity herein could not challenge any thing peculiar, or could upon this ſcore appear ſo neceſſary as St. Paul pretendeth.

Pſ. li. 10.

Pſ. cxliii. 10. cxix. 35, 36.

3. From the juſtification St. Paul ſpeaketh of, all reſpect to any works, and to any qualifications in men, (ſuch as might beget in them any confidence in themſelves, or yield occaſion of boaſting,) is excluded; it cannot then

fore well be underſtood for a conſtituting man intrinſecally righteous, or infuſing worthy qualities into him; but rather for an act of God terminated upon a man as altogether unworthy of God's love, as impious, as an enemy, as a pure object of mercy; ſo it is moſt natural to underſtand thoſe expreſſions, importing the ſame thing; *God juſtifieth the ungodly; we being ſinners, Chriſt died for us;* (purchaſing, as the following words imply, juſtification for us;) *being yet enemies, we by his death were reconciled,* or juſtified, for reconciliation and juſtification, as we before noted, do there ſignify the ſame.

Rom. iv. 5. v. 8.

Rom. v. 10.

4. Abraham is brought in as an inſtance of a perſon juſtified in the ſame manner, as Chriſtians are according to the Goſpel: but his juſtification was merely the approving and eſteeming him righteous, in regard (not to any other good works, but) to his ſteadfaſt faith, and ſtrong perſuaſion concerning the power and faithfulneſs of God—becauſe *he was fully perſuaded, that what God had promiſed he was able to perform;* to which faith and juſtification conſequent thereon, St. Paul comparing thoſe of Chriſtians, ſubjoineth; *Now it was not written for his ſake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us alſo, to whom it ſhall be imputed, if we believe on him that raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from the dead.* As then it were an idle thing to fancy a righteouſneſs, upon the ſcore of that belief, dropt into Abraham; and as his being juſtified is expreſsly called, having righteouſneſs, upon the account of his faith, imputed, or aſcribed, to him; ſo our juſtification (like and anſwerable to his) ſhould correſpondently be underſtood, the approving and accounting us, notwithſtanding our former tranſgreſſions, as righteous perſons, in regard to that honeſt and ſteadfaſt faith, wherein we reſemble *that Father of the faithful.*

Rom. iv. 21.

Rom. iv. 23, 24.

Even St. James himſelf, when he ſaith that Abraham and Rahab were juſtified by works, it is evident that he meaneth not that they had certain righteous qualities infuſed into them, or were made thence by God intrinſecally more righteous than they were before, but that they were approved and accepted by God, becauſe of the good

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works they performed, (in faith and obedience to God,) one of them offering to ſacrifice his ſon, the other preſerving the ſpies ſent from God's people.

5. The ſo often uſing the word imputation of righteouſneſs, inſtead of juſtification, doth imply this act not to be a tranſient operation upon the ſoul of man, but an act immanent to God's mind, reſpecting man only as its object, and tranſlating him into another relative ſtate: with this ſenſe that word excellently well agreeth, otherwiſe it were obſcure, and ſo apt to perplex the matter, that probably St. Paul would not have uſed it.

6. Again, when it is ſaid again and again, *that faith is imputed for righteouſneſs*, it is plain enough, that no other thing in man was required thereto; to ſay, that he is thereby ſanctified, or hath gracious habits infuſed, is uncouth and arbitrarious: the obvious meaning is, that therefore he is graciouſly accepted and approved, as we ſaid before.

7. We might in fine add, that the word juſtification is very ſeldom or never uſed in that ſenſe of making perſons righteous, or infuſing righteouſneſs into them. Bellarmine and Grotius, having ſearched with all poſſible diligence, do allege three or four places, wherein (with ſome plauſible appearance) they pretend it muſt be ſo underſtood: but as they are ſo few, ſo are they not any of them thoroughly clear and certain; but are capable to be otherwiſe interpreted without much ſtraining; the cleareſt place, Dan. xii. 3. the LXX. read מצדקים, ἀπὸ δικαίων, which the Hebrew and ſenſe will bear. Wherefore the other ſenſe, which we have maintained, being undeniably common and current in the Scripture, and having ſo many particular reaſons ſhewing it agreeable to St. Paul's intent, ſeemeth rather to be embraced.

In St. Paul's Epiſtles I can only find three or four places, wherein the word *juſtifying* may with any fair probability be ſo extended as to ſignify an internal operation of God upon the ſoul of men; they are theſe:

1 Cor. vi. 11. *And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye have been waſhed, but ye have been ſanctified, but ye have been juſtified in the*

*name of Christ Jesus, and * by the Spirit of our God;* where justification being performed by the Spirit of God, seemeth to imply a spiritual operation upon a man's soul, as an ingredient thereof.

According to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he poured on us richly by Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we may be made heirs, according to the hope of everlasting life: where God's justifying us by the grace of Christ seemeth to include the renewing by the Holy Ghost. Tit. iii. 5, 6, 7.

He that dieth, is justified from sin: where St. Paul speaking about our obligation to lead a new life in holy obedience, upon account of our being dedicated to Christ, and renouncing sin in baptism, may be interpreted to mean a being really in our hearts purified and freed from sin. Rom. vi. 7.

Whom he predestinated, those he called; and whom he called, those he justified; and whom he justified, those he glorified: where the chief acts of God toward those who finally shall be saved, being in order purposely recited, and justification being immediately (without interposing sanctification) coupled to glorification, the word may seem to comprise sanctification. Rom. viii. 30.

If considering these places (which yet are not clearly prejudicial to the notion we have made good, but may well be interpreted so as to agree thereto) it shall seem to any, that St. Paul doth not ever so strictly adhere to that notion, as not sometime to extend the word to a larger sense, I shall not much contend about it: it is an ordinary thing for all writers to use their words sometimes in a larger, sometimes in a stricter sense; and it sufficeth to have shewn, that where St. Paul purposely treateth about the matter we discourse upon, the purport of his discourse argueth, that he useth it according to that notion which we have proposed.

8. I shall only add one small observation *ma*[illegible] [illegible]ture, favouring this notion; which is the pro[illegible] it respecteth of all St. Paul's discourse and disputatio referring to the pa[illegible]

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which ſeemeth to have been this: That Chriſtianity ſhould (upon ſo ſlender a condition or performance as that of faith) tender unto all perſons indifferently, however culpable or flagitious their former lives had been, a plenary remiſſion of ſins and reception into God's favour, did ſeem an unreaſonable and implauſible thing to many: the Jews could not well conceive, or reliſh, that any man ſo eaſily ſhould be tranſlated into a ſtate equal, or ſuperior to that, which they took themſelves peculiarly to enjoy: the Gentiles themſelves (eſpecially ſuch as conceited well of their own wiſdom and virtue) could hardly digeſt it: Celſus in Origen could not imagine or admit, that bare faith ſhould work ſuch a miracle, as preſently to turn a diſſolute perſon into a ſaint, beloved of God, and deſigned to happineſs.

Vid. Cyrill. adv. Julian. lib. vii. p. 248. where juſtification is very well deſcribed.

ψιλὴ πίστις.

Zozimus ſaith of Conſtantine, that he choſe Chriſtianity as the only religion, that promiſed impunity and pardon for his enormous practices; intimating his diſlike of that point in our religion. This prejudice againſt the Goſpel St. Paul removeth, by ſhewing that, becauſe of all men's guilt and ſinfulneſs, ſuch an exhibition of mercy, ſuch an overture of acceptance, ſuch a remiſſion of ſin was neceſſary in order to ſalvation, ſo that without it no man could be exempted from wrath and miſery; and that conſequently all other religions (as not exhibiting ſuch a remiſſion) were to be deemed in a main point defective: when therefore he uſeth the word juſtification to expreſs this matter, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he intendeth thereby to ſignify that remiſſion, or diſpenſation of mercy.

It may be objected, that St. Auſtin and ſome others of the Fathers do uſe the word commonly according to the ſenſe of the Tridentine Council. I anſwer, that the point having never been diſcuſſed, and they never having thoroughly conſidered the ſenſe of St. Paul, might unawares take the word as it ſounded in Latin, eſpecially the ſenſe they affixy to it, ſignifying a matter very true and certain in Chr God up. The like hath happened to other Fathers in *And ſuch were* d might happen to them in this, not to *but ye have been ſan.* points that never had been ſifted by

diſputation. More, I think, we need not ſay in anſwer to their authority.

VI. So much may ſuffice for a general explication of the notion; but for a more full clearing of the point, it may be requiſite to reſolve a queſtion concerning the time when this act is performed or diſpenſed. It may be inquired, when God juſtifieth, whether once, or at ſeveral times, or continually. To which queſtion I anſwer briefly:

1. That the juſtification which St. Paul diſcourſeth of, ſeemeth in his meaning, only or eſpecially to be that act of grace, which is diſpenſed to perſons at their baptiſm, or at their entrance into the Church; when they openly profeſſing their faith, and undertaking the practice of Chriſtian duty, God moſt ſolemnly and formally doth abſolve them from all guilt, and accepteth them into a ſtate of favour with him: that St. Paul only or chiefly reſpecteth this act, conſidering his deſign, I am inclined to think, and many paſſages in his diſcourſe ſeem to imply.

If his deſign were (as I conceive it probable) to vindicate the proceeding of God, peculiarly declared in the Goſpel, in receiving the moſt notorious and heinous tranſgreſſors to grace in baptiſm, then eſpecially muſt the juſtification he ſpeaketh of relate to that; to confirm which ſuppoſition, we may conſider, that,

1. In ſeveral places juſtification is coupled with baptiſmal regeneration and abſolution: *Such were ſome of you; but ye have been waſhed, ye have been ſanctified, ye have been juſtified in the name of Chriſt Jeſus:* (where, by the way, being ſanctified and being juſtified ſeem equivalent terms; as in that place where Chriſt is ſaid to *have given himſelf for the Church, that he might ſanctify it, and cleanſe it with the waſhing of water by the Word,* ſanctification, I conceive, importeth the ſame thing with juſtification.) Again, *He ſaved us by the laver of regeneration, that having been juſtified by his grace, we may be made heirs of everlaſting life.*

1 Cor. vi. 11.

Eph. v. 25, 26.

Heb. x. 29.

Tit. iii. 5, 7.

Heb. x. 22, 23.

2. St. Paul in expreſſing this act, as it reſpecteth the faithful, commonly doth uſe a tenſe referring to the paſt

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time: he saith not δικαιούμενοι, *being justified*, but δικαιωθέντες, *having been justified;* not δικαιοῦσθε, *ye are justified*, but δικαιώθητε, *ye have been justified;* namely, at some remarkable time, that is, at their entrance into Christianity. (Our translators do render it according to the present time; but it should be rendered as I say, in our text, and in other places.)

Rom. v. 1, 9. Tit. iii. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

Rom. vi.

3. St. Paul in the 6th to the Romans discourseth thus: Seeing we in baptism are cleansed and disentangled from sin, are *dead to it, and so justified from it*, God forbid that we should return to live in the practice thereof, so abusing and evacuating the grace we have received; which discourse seemeth plainly to signify, that he treateth about the justification conferred in baptism.

Rom. iii. 25.

4. He expresseth the justification he speaketh of by the words πάρεσις τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων, *the passing over foregoing sins*, which seemeth to respect that universal absolution, which is exhibited in baptism. *Being*, saith he, *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.*

5. The relation this justification hath to faith, being dispensed in regard thereto, (or upon condition thereof,) doth infer the same: Faith is nothing else but a hearty embracing Christianity, which first exerteth itself by open declaration and avowal in baptism, (when we *believe with our hearts to righteousness, and confess with our mouth to salvation;*) to that time therefore the act of justification may be supposed especially to appertain: then, when the evangelical covenant is solemnly ratified, the grace thereof especially is conferred. Upon such considerations I conceive that St. Paul's justification chiefly doth respect that act of grace, which God consigneth to us at our baptism. But farther,

Rom. x. 10.

2. The virtue and effect of that first justifying act doth continue (we abide in a justified state) so long as we do perform the conditions imposed by God, and undertaken

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y us at our first justification; *holding fast the profession of r hope without wavering; keeping faith, and a good conience;* so long as we do not forfeit the benefit of that nce by *making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience,* lapsing into infidelity, or profaneness of life. Our case plainly like to that of a subject, who having rebelled ginst his prince, and thence incurred his displeasure, but wing afterward upon his submission, by the clemency of is prince, obtained an act of pardon, restoring him to favour and enjoyment of the protection and privileges suitble to a loyal subject, doth continue in this state, until y forsaking his allegiance, and running again into rebellion, he so loseth the benefit of that pardon, that his offence is aggravated thereby: so if we do persevere firm in faith and obedience, we shall (according to the purport of the evangelical covenant) continue in a state of grace and favour with God, and in effect remain justified; otherwise the virtue of our justification ceaseth, and we in regard thereto are more deeply involved in guilt.

Heb. x. 23. 1 Tim. i. 19. 2 Pet. ii. 20, &c. Heb. x. 26, 38. vi. 1.

3. Although justification chiefly signifieth the first act of grace toward a Christian at his baptism, yet (according to analogy of reason, and affinity in the nature of things) every dispensation of pardon granted upon repentance may be styled justification; for as particular acts of repentance, upon the commission of any particular sins, do not so much differ in nature, as in measure or degree, from that general conversion practised in embracing the Gospel; so the grace vouchsafed upon these penitential acts, is only in largeness of extent, and solemnity of administration, diversified from that; especially considering that repentance after baptism is but a reviving of that first great resolution and engagement we made in baptism; that remission of sin upon it is only the renovation of the grace then exhibited; that the whole transaction in this case is but a reinstating the covenant then made (and afterward by transgression infringed) upon the same terms, which were then agreed upon; that consequently, by congruous analogy, his remission of sins, and restoring to favour, granted to a penitent, are only the former justification reinforced;

Pœnitentia imitatur baptismatis gratiam. *Hier. adv. Pelag.* i. 10.

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whence they may bear its name: but whether St. Paul ever meaneth the word to ſignify thus, I cannot affirm.

Now according to each of theſe notions all good Chriſtians may be ſaid to have been juſtified; they have been juſtified by a general abolition of their ſins, and reception into God's favour in baptiſm; they ſo far have enjoyed the virtue of that gracious diſpenſation, and continued in a juſtified ſtate, as they have perſiſted in faith and obedience; they have, upon falling into ſin, and riſing thence by repentance, been juſtified by particular remiſſions. So that *having been juſtified by faith, they have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

I Believe in God,

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THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM THE FRAME OF THE WORLD.

JER. li. 15.

He hath made the earth by his power, he hath eſtabliſhed the world by his wiſdom, and hath ſtretched out the heaven by his underſtanding. Jer. x. 12.

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THE attentive obſervation of this world, or viſible frame, is not only in itſelf a moſt worthy employment of our thoughts, (much more noble than any of thoſe petty cares, which commonly poſſeſs or diſtract our minds,) but, if either the example of the beſt men, or the great uſefulneſs thereof, to the beſt purpoſes, can oblige us, even a conſiderable duty not to be neglected by us. For it is that which affords moſt cogent and ſatisfactory arguments to convince us of, and to confirm us in, the belief of that truth which is the foundation of all religion and piety, the being of one God, incomprehenſibly excellent in all perfections, the maker and upholder of all things; it inſtructs us not only that God is, but more diſtinctly ſhews what he is; declaring his chief and peculiar attributes of wiſdom, goodneſs, and power ſuperlative; it alſo ſerves to beget in our minds affections toward God, ſuitable to thoſe notions; a reverent adoration of his unſearchable wiſdom; an awful dread of his powerful Majeſty; a

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ſame end and effect, (to the ſame uſeful end, to the ſame handſome effect?) Are not confuſion, diſparity, deformity, unaccountable change and variety, the proper iſſues of chance[a]? It is Ariſtotle's diſcourſe: *That one or two things*, ſaith he, *ſhould happen to be in the ſame manner, is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe; but that all things ſhould conſpire by chance, it looks like a fiction to conceive: what is univerſal and perpetual cannot reſult from chance. We can only*, ſaith he again, *with good reaſon aſſert, or ſuppoſe ſuch cauſes of things, as we ſee generally or frequently to occur*[b]. Now did we ever obſerve (or ever any man through the whole courſe of times) any new thing like or comparable to any of theſe, to ſpring up caſually? Do we not with admiration regard (as a thing very rare and unaccountable) in other pieces of matter any groſs reſemblance to theſe, that ſeemeth to ariſe from contingent motions and occurrences of bodies? If chance hath formerly produced ſuch things, how comes it, that it doth not ſometime now produce the like; whence becomes it for ſo many ages altogether impotent and idle? Is it not the ſame kind of cauſe? hath it not the ſame inſtruments to work with, and the ſame materials to work upon? The truth is, as it doth not now, ſo it did not, it could not ever produce ſuch effects; ſuch effects are plainly improper and incongruous to ſuch a cauſe: chance never writ a legible book; chance never built a fair houſe; chance never drew a neat picture; it never did any of theſe things, nor ever will; nor can be without abſurdity ſuppoſed able to do them; which yet are works very groſs and rude, very eaſy and feaſible, as it were, in compariſon to the production of a flower or a tree. It is not therefore reaſonable to aſcribe thoſe things to chance: To what then? will you

[a] —Fortuna amica varietati conſtantiam reſpuit. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* 2.

Ὁ λίαν ὑπερβάλλων ἀριθμὸς ἃ δύναται μετέχειν τάξεως· θείας γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο δυνάμεως ἔργον, ἥτις καὶ τόδε συνέχει τὸ πᾶν. *Ariſt. Pol.* vii. 4.

[b] Τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἓν ἢ δύο τοῦτον τρόπον ἔχειν, εὐδὲν ἄτοπον· τὸ δὲ πάνθ' ὁμοίως πλάσματι ἔοικεν, ἅμα δὲ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς φύσει τὸ ὡς ἔτυχεν. οὐδὲ τὸ πανταχοῦ, καὶ πᾶσιν ὑπάρχον τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς τύχης. *De Cœlo*, ii. 8.

Μόνα γὰρ ταῦτα θειότον εὐλόγως, ὅσα ἐπὶ πολλῶν, ἢ πάντων ὁρῶμεν ὑπάρχοντα. *Id. de Cœlo.*

; to neceſſity? If you do, you do only alter the phraſe; neceſſary cauſality (as applicable to this caſe, and en without relation to ſome wiſdom or counſel that ıbliſhed it) is but another name for chance; they both but ſeveral terms denoting blindneſs and unadviſed- s in action; both muſt imply a fortuitous determina- ı of cauſes, acting without deſign or rule. A for- tous determination, I ſay; for motions of matter, not ided by art or counſel, muſt be in their riſe fortuitous, ſomuch as that according to the nature of the thing re is no repugnance, and we may eaſily conceive it ſible, that the matter might have been moved other- e; there being therein no principle originally deter- ning it to this more than to that ſort of motion;) and ſame motions in their proceſs muſt be determinate, auſe in their ſubject there is no principle, whereby it alter its courſe. The ſame effect therefore of this d, if neceſſary, is caſual as to its original, and in that pect may be ſaid to come from chance; if caſual, is eſſary in the progreſs, and may thence be ſaid to pro- d from neceſſity. And although we ſhould ſuppoſe beginning of theſe cauſes in their action, or motion, be eternal, it were all one; for whether now, or terday, or from eternity, infers no difference (except entangling our minds, and encumbering the caſe with ertinent circumſtances) as to our purpoſe; not the umſtance of the time, but the quality of the cauſe ng only here conſiderable; the ſame cauſes (abſtract- from all counſel ordering them) being alike apt or ot yeſterday as to-day, always as ſometimes, from all nity as at any ſet time, to produce ſuch effects. Neither we therefore reaſonably attribute the effects we ſpeak o neceſſity; except only to ſuch an hypothetical ne- ity, as implies a determination from cauſes acting by and underſtanding; of ſuch a neceſſity matter is very eptive; being perfectly obedient to art directing it competent force; as on the other hand we find it reaſon and experience altogether unapt, without ſuch ction, of itſelf (that is, either neceſſarily or contin-

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gently) to come into any regular form, or to purſue any conſtant courſe; it being, as we ſee, ſhattered into particles innumerable, different in ſize, ſhape, and motion, according to all variety more than imaginable; thence only fit in their proceedings to croſs and confound each other: the determination therefore of ſuch cauſes as theſe to ſuch ends and effects, can be only the reſult of wiſdom, art, and counſel; which alone (accompanied with ſufficient power) can digeſt things, void of underſtanding, into handſome order, can direct them unto fit uſes, can preſerve them in a conſtant tenor of action; theſe effects muſt therefore, I ſay, proceed from wiſdom, and that no mean one, but ſuch as greatly ſurpaſſes our comprehenſion, joined with a power equally great: for to digeſt bodies ſo very many, ſo very fine and ſubtile, ſo divers in motion and tendency, that they ſhall never hinder or diſturb one another, but always conſpire to the ſame deſign, is a performance exceedingly beyond our capacity to reach how it could be contrived or accompliſhed; all the endeavours of our deepeſt ſkill and moſt laborious induſtry cannot arrive to the producing of any work not extremely inferior to any of theſe, not in compariſon very ſimple and baſe; neither can our wits ſerve to deviſe, nor our ſenſe to direct, nor our hand to execute any work, in any degree like to thoſe. So that it was but faintly, though truly, ſaid of him in Cicero, concerning things of this kind; *Nature's powerful ſagacity no ſkill, no hand, no artiſt can follow by imitation.*

Naturæ ſolertiam nulla ars, nulla manus, nemo opifex conſequi poſſit imitando. *Cic. de N. D.* ii. 32.

And if we have reaſon to acknowledge ſo much wiſdom and power diſcovered in one plant, and the ſame conſequently multiplied in ſo many thouſands of divers kinds; how much more may we diſcern them in any one animal, in all of them? the parts of whom in unconceivable variety, in delicate minuteneſs, in exquiſiteneſs of ſhape, poſition, and temper, do indeed ſo far exceed the other, as they appear deſigned to functions far more various and more noble; the enumeration of a few whereof, obvious to our ſenſe, in ſome one living creature, together with conjectures about their manner of operation and their uſe

ıow much induſtry of man hath it employed; how many 'olumes hath it filled, and how many more may it do, vithout detecting a ten thouſandth part of what is there noſt obvious and eaſy; without piercing near the depth f that wiſdom, which formed ſo curious a piece? So nuch however is palpably manifeſt, that each of theſe ſo nany organs was deſigned, and fitted on purpoſe to that hief uſe, or operation, we ſee it to perform; this, of them o continue the kind; that, to preſerve the *individuum;* his, to diſcern what is neceſſary, convenient, or pleaſant to he creature, or what is dangerous, offenſive, or deſtructive hereto; that, to purſue or embrace, to decline or ſhun it; his, to enjoy what is procured of good; that, to remove vhat is hurtful or uſeleſs, or to guard from miſchief and njury; that each one is furniſhed with ſuch apt inſtruments, ſuitable to its particular needs, appetites, capacities, ations, is moſt apparent; and I muſt therefore here aſk gain, (and that with more advantage,) whence this could roceed; whence all theſe parts came to be faſhioned and uited; all of them ſo neceſſary, or ſo convenient, that one without the imperfection and the prejudice of the reature, ſome not without its deſtruction, can be wanting? vho ſhaped and tempered thoſe hidden ſubtile ſprings of fe, ſenſe, imagination, memory, paſſion; who impreſſed on hem a motion ſo regular and ſo durable, which through o many years, among ſo many adverſe contingencies ſailing it, is yet ſo ſteadily maintained? Can this howver proceed from giddy chance, or blind neceſſity? could ver (of old or lately, it is all one) ſenſeleſs matter jumble ſelf ſo fortunately, into ſo wonderful poſtures, ſo that of hoſe innumerable myriads of atoms, or ſmall inſenſible odies, (which compoſe each of theſe curious engines,) one ſhould in its roving miſs the way; none fail to ſtop nd ſeat itſelf in that due place, where exacteſt art would ave diſpoſed it[c]? Could ſo many, ſo dim, ſo narrow marks

[c] Ἐπιλθὲ τῶν μιλῶν ἑκάστου τὴν διάπλασιν, τὸ σχῆμα, τὰς ἐνεργείας, τὴν πρὸς ἄλλα συμφωνίαν· καὶ πάσης πόλεως εὐνομουμένης καὶ φιλοσόφους ἅπαντας τοὺς λόγους ἰσχύσης ἀκριβεστέραν ὄψει τὴν μιλῶν τούτων πρὸς ἄλληλα πολιτείαν. *Chryſ.* n. vi. *Or.* 69.

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be hit without the aim of a moſt piercing and unerring eye; without the guidance of a moſt ſteady and immoveable hand? All that grace and beauty, which ſo delights our ſenſe beholding it; all that correſpondence and ſymmetry, which ſo ſatisfies our mind conſidering it; all that virtue and energy, extending to performances ſo great and admirable, muſt they be aſcribed to cauſes of no worth, and ſuppoſed done to no purpoſe? that eye which reaches the very ſtars, and in a moment renders all the world, as it were, preſent to the creature that uſeth it; that ear which perceives the leaſt ſtirring of the air about it, and ſo ſubtly diſtinguiſhes the ſmalleſt differences in its motions; that tongue which ſo readily is compoſed to imitate ſo many petty diverſities of tune; thoſe other organs, which are affected by the leaſt breath or vapour, by the leaſt tang or ſavour, ſo that it by them can both perceive the preſence, and diſtinguiſh the quality of whatever is near, that it may not be diſappointed in miſſing what is beneficial, nor be ſurpriſed by the aſſault of what is noxious thereto; all theſe and many more, the defect, diſtemper, or diſlocation of which would be diſgraceful, incommodious, or deſtructive to the creature; all theſe, I ſay, can any man, endued with common ſenſe, or ordinary ingenuity, affirm to have proceeded from any other cauſe, than from a wiſdom and power incomprehenſible? [d] May not the moſt excellent pieces of human artifice, the faireſt ſtructures, the fineſt portraitures, the moſt ingenious and uſeful inquiries, ſuch as we are wont moſt to admire and commend, with infinitely more eaſe, happen to exiſt without any contrivance or induſtry ſpent upon them? If we cannot allow thoſe rude imitations of nature to ſpring up of themſelves, but as ſoon as we eſpy them are ready to acknowledge them products of excellent art, though we know not the artiſt, nor did ſee him work; how much more reaſon is there that we ſhould believe thoſe works of nature ſo incomparably more accurate, to proceed alſo from art although inviſible to us, and performing its workmanſhip

Vid. Chryſ. Ἀνάλ. κα'.

[d] Μή τι ἀκριβέστερον τεχνῶν τῶν ἐπιγείων; τί δὲ ὁ συνεχέστατα καὶ τανύτατα ἐκ μικρῶν πεφυκότων ἱδύματα; ὁ δίκτυον δι' αὐτῶν τὸ ἄφθον καὶ τὸ θῆλυ, &c. *Epiſt.* l. 1

ra ſecret hand? I can aſſure you of thoſe, who have with eateſt attention contemplated theſe things, and who paſs r men moſt able to judge in the caſe, (even thoſe who ve diſcovered leaſt affection to religion, or indeed are ore than ſuſpected of an averſion from it; whoſe words erefore may be taken at leaſt for impartial dictates of com- n ſenſe,) that even from ſuch the irreſiſtible force and idence of the thing hath extorted clear and ample con- ſions to this purpoſe: [c] that in nature nothing is per- med without reaſon or deſign; but every thing in the ſt manner and to the beſt end, beyond what is done in y art, is frequently aſſerted and aſſumed by Ariſtotle nſelf, as a moſt evident truth: that in contriving the me of our bodies, (and the ſame holdeth concerning the dies of other animals,) a wiſdom inſcrutable; in accom- ſhing it, a power inſuperable; in deſigning to them ſo ch of decency and convenience, a benignity wor- y of all veneration are demonſtrated, Galen in ſeve- places, with language very full and expreſs, yea very neſt and pathetical, doth acknowledge [f]. That who th attently regard a locuſt, or a caterpillar, or any other er animal, ſhall every where therein diſcover a wonderful : and diligence, is an aphoriſm dropt even from the ıomy pen of Cardan [g]. That *if any man ſhall view tho- ıghly all the inſtruments both of generation and nutrition, l doth not perceive them to have been made and ordered to ir reſpective offices by ſome mind*, (or intelligent agent,) *is to be reputed himſelf void of mind* [h], (or out of his

Ariſt. de Part. An. i. 1. Μᾶλλον δ' ἐστὶ τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα, καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἐν τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις, ἢ ἐν τοῖς τῆς τέχνης.

[c] φύσις ἀεὶ πρὸς τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον. *Phyſ.* ii. 8.

[d] φύσις ἀδὲν ἀλόγως οὐδὲ μάτην ποιεῖ. *De Cœlo*, ii. 11.

[e] ἕνεκα τοῦ ἅπαντα ὑπάρχει τὰ φύσει. *De Anima*, iii. 12.

Gal. de Placitis Hippoc. et Plat. lib. 7. *de Uſu Part.* 3. Οἷος μὲν ἐστὶ τὴν σοφίαν, ἢ τὴν δύναμιν, ἑπαῖος δὲ τὴν χρηστότητα, &c.

Card. de Variet. vii. 27. pag. 283. *Hobbes. de Hom.* cap. 1.

Itaque ad ſenſus procedo, ſatis habens ſi hujuſmodi res attigero tantum, ius autem tractandas aliis reliquero, qui ſi machinas omnes tum genera- is, tum nutritionis ſatis perſpexerint, nec tamen eas a mente aliqua con- , ordinataſque ad ſua quaſque officia viderint, ipſi profecto ſine mente cenſendi ſunt.

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wits,) is the expreſſion of another perſon well known among us, whom few do judge partial to this ſide, or ſuſpicious of bearing a favourable prejudice to religion. Thus doth common ſenſe from theſe ſort of beings, whereof there be innumerable expoſed daily to our obſervation, even ſingly conſidered, deduce the exiſtence of a wiſdom, power, and goodneſs unconceivably great; and there are probably divers others (ſtones, metals, minerals, &c.) no leſs obvious, even here upon the earth, our place of dwelling, which, were our ſenſes able to diſcern their conſtitution and texture, would afford matter of the ſame acknowledgment[h].

II. But if, paſſing from ſuch particulars, we obſerve the relation of ſeveral kinds of things each to other, we ſhall find more reaſon to be convinced concerning the ſame excellent perfections farther extending themſelves. By ſuch compariſon we may eaſily diſcern, that what ſpeaks much of art in itſelf ſingly conſidered, declares more thereof in reſpect to other things; and that many things, in which, ſeparately looked upon, we could perceive but ſmall artifice, have indeed much of it in ſuch relation, (which although ſeeming in themſelves mean and deſpicable, are yet very uſeful and neceſſary to conſiderable purpoſes, in ſubſerviency to the convenience of more noble beings;) and though perhaps we cannot thoroughly penetrate the relative uſe and deſign of every thing, which hangs up before us in Nature's ſhop, (by reaſon of our incapacity, or unſkilfulneſs in her trade,) yet we ſhall have reaſon, from what we can plainly diſcover, to collect, that each piece there is a tool accommodate to ſome uſe. Is there not, for inſtance, a palpable relation between the frame, the temper, the natural inclinations, or inſtincts, of each animal, and its element, or natural place and abode; wherein it can only live, finding therein its food, its harbour, its refuge? [i] Is not to each faculty within (or to each ſenſitive

[h] Νὴ τὸν Δία καὶ τοὺς Θεοὺς ἐν τῶν γιγνομένων ἑκάστου πρὸς τὸ αἰδεῖσθαι τῆς σφετέρας τέχνης τέχνη αἰδήμονι, καὶ εἰχαρίστῳ. *Epict.* l. 26.

[i] Εἰ χρήματα ὁ Θεὸς πεποίηκε, δύναμιν δὲ θεωρικὴν οὐκέτι μὴ πεποίηκε, τί ἂν ἦν ὄφελος; ἀδοκίμαστον ἀλλ' ἀνάγκαλον, εἰ τὸν μὲν δύναμιν πεποίηκε, τὰ ὄντα δὲ μὴ ποιοῦντα, οἷα ὑποτίθεται τῇ δυνάμει τῇ ἐμφυτικῇ, καὶ ὅτου τι ἂν ὄφελος; ἀδοκίμαστον τι δ'

n) an object without prepared, exactly correſpondent
to; which were it wanting, the faculty would be-
: vain and uſeleſs, yea ſometime harmful and deſtruc-
as reciprocally the object would import little or no-
; if ſuch a faculty were not provided and ſuited
to? As for example, what would an eye (or the vi-
power) ſignify, if there were not light prepared to
r things viſible thereto? and how much leſs con-
ble than it is would the goodly light itſelf be, were
ings in nature blind, and uncapable to diſcern there-
What would the ear ſerve for, if the air were not
ly diſpoſed (made neither too thick nor too thin;
r too reſty nor too fleeting, but) in a due conſiſt-
and capable of moderate undulations diſtinguiſh-
thereby? The like we might with the ſame reaſon
e concerning the other ſenſes and faculties, vital or
l, and their reſpective objects, which we may ob-
with admirable congruity reſpecting each other.
not all thoſe goodly colours, and comely ſhapes,
in the leaves, the flowers, and the fruits of plants
ght add in gems and precious ſtones; yea in all ſorts
ing creatures) we behold, an evident reſpect to the
and the ſight a no leſs viſible reference to them?
: many kinds of pleaſant fragrancy in herbs, flowers,
pices, have they not a like manifeſt relation to the
and it to them? Could all that great variety of
ſome, ſavoury, and delicious fruits, herbs, grains,
, ſeeds, and roots become ſo conſtantly produced,
wiſe than for the purpoſe of feeding and ſuſtaining
creatures with pleaſure and content? Is there not a
ous correſpondence between them and the organs
e, digeſtion, and nutrition? Are there not appetites
ting, yea with intolerable pain provoking each liv-
eature to ſeek its proper ſuſtenance? and doth it not
the enjoyment hereof a pleaſure and ſatisfaction
eſſible? Let me add: whence comes it to paſs, that

ἕτερα ταῦτα πεπεύκεν, φῶς δὲ μὴ πεπεύκεν· ἐὰν ὅτῳ τι ὄφελος· τίς τοῦτο πρὸς ἐκεῖνο, καὶ ἐκεῖνο πρὸς τοῦτο; *Epict.* i. 6.

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ordinarily in nature nothing occurs noiſome or troubleſome to any ſenſe; but all things wholeſome and comfortable, at leaſt innocent or inoffenſive? that we may wander all about without being urged to ſhut our eyes, to ſtop our ears, our mouths, our noſes; but rather invited to open all the avenues of our ſoul, for admiſſion of the kind entertainments Nature ſets before us? Doth ſhe not every where preſent ſpectacles of delight (ſomewhat of lively picture, ſomewhat of gay embroidery, ſomewhat of elegant ſymmetry) to our eyes, however ſeldom any thing appears horrid or ugly to them? Where is it that we meet with noiſes ſo violent, or ſo jarring, as to offend our ears? is not there rather provided for us, wherever we go, ſome kind of harmony grateful to them; not only in fields and woods the ſweet chirping of birds; by rivers the ſoft warbling of the ſtreams; but even the rude winds whiſtle in a tune not unpleaſant; the toſſing ſeas yield a kind of ſolemn and graver melody? All the air about us, is it not (not only not noiſome to our ſmell, but) very comfortable and refreſhing? and doth not even the dirty earth yield a wholeſome and medicinal ſcent? So many, ſo plain, ſo exactly congruous are the relations of things here about us each to other; which ſurely could not otherwiſe come than from one admirable wiſdom and power conſpiring thus to adapt and connect them together; as alſo from an equal goodneſs, declared in all theſe things being ſquared ſo fitly for mutual benefit and convenience. Theſe conſiderations are applicable to all (even to the meaner ſorts of) animals; which being the only creatures capable of joy and pleaſure, or liable to grief and pain, it was fit, that inſenſible things ſhould be diſpoſed to ſerve their needs and uſes; which hath been with ſo wonderful a care performed, that of ſo vaſt a number among them there is none ſo vile or contemptible, (no worm, no fly, no inſect,) for whoſe maintenance, whoſe defence, whoſe ſatisfaction, competent (ſhall I ſay, or abundant) proviſion hath not been made, both intrinſecal (by a frame of organs fitting them to obtain and to enjoy what is good for them, to ſhun and repel what is bad; by ſtrong appe-

tites inciting them to ſearch after and purſue, or to beware and decline reſpectively; by ſtrange inſtincts enabling them to diſtinguiſh between what is fit for them to procure or embrace, to remove or avoid;) and extrinſecal alſo, by a great variety of conveniences, anſwerable to their ſeveral deſires and needs, diſperſed all about, and every where, as it were, offered to them. So that the holy Pſalmiſt (conſidering this, and taking upon him to be, as it were, their chaplain) had reaſon to ſay this grace for them: *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon; thou openeſt thine hand, and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.* But eſpecially (that which as reaſon enables us, ſo due gratitude obliges us, and prompts us eſpecially to obſerve) there is an evident regard (ſo evident, that even Pliny, a profeſſed Epicurean, could not forbear acknowledging it) which all things bear to man, the prince of creatures viſible; [k] they being all as on purpoſe ordered to yield tribute unto him; to ſupply his wants, to gratify his deſires; with profit and pleaſure to exerciſe his faculties; to content, as it were, even his humour and curioſity. All things about us do miniſter (or at leaſt may do ſo, if we would improve the natural inſtruments, and the opportunities afforded us) to our preſervation, eaſe, or delight. The hidden bowels of the earth yield us treaſures of metals and minerals, quarries of ſtone and coal, ſo neceſſary, ſo ſerviceable to divers good uſes, that we could not commodiouſly be without them; the vileſt and moſt common ſtones we tread on (even in that we tread on them) are uſeful, and ſerve to many good purpoſes beſide: [l] the ſurface of the earth how is it beſpread

Pſal. cxlv. 15.

[k] Ejus (hominis) cauſa videtur cuncta alia genuiſſe natura. *Plin.* lib. vi. cap. 1.

Ut omnis rerum naturæ pars tributum aliquod nobis conferret. *Sen. de Benef.* 4, 5.

Neque enim neceſſitatibus tantummodo noſtris proviſum eſt; uſque in delicias amamur. *Ibid.*

Ut interdum Pronœa noſtra Epicurea eſſe videatur. *Cic. de N. D.* 2.

[l] Vera eſt ſententia Stoicorum, qui aiunt noſtra cauſa mundum eſſe conſtructum. Omnia enim quibus conſtat, quæque generat ex ſe mundus, ad utilitatem hominis accommodata ſunt. *Lact. de Ira*, 13.

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all over, as a table well furnifhed, with variety of delicat fruits, herbs, and grains to nourifh our bodies, to pleaf our taftes, to cheer our fpirits, to cure our difeafes! how many fragrant and beautiful flowers offer themfelves fo the comfort of our fmell, and the delight of our fight Neither can our ears complain, fince every wood breeds a quire of natural muficians, ready to entertain them with eafy and unaffected harmony. The woods, I fay, which alfo adorned with ftately trees afford us a pleafant view and a refrefhing fhade, fhelter from weather and fun, fuel for our fires, materials for our houfes and our fhipping; with divers other needful utenfils. Even the barren mountains fend us down frefh ftreams of water, fo neceffary to the fupport of our lives, fo profitable for the fructification of our grounds, fo commodious for conveyance of our wares, and maintaining intercourfe among us. Yea the wide feas are not (altogether improfitable) wafte; but freely yield us, without our tillage, many rich harvefts, tranfmitting our commerce and traffic, furnifhing our tables with ftores of dainty fifh, fupplying the bottles of heaven with waters to refrefh the earth, being inexhauftible cifterns, from whence our rivers and fountains are derived; the very rude and boifterous winds themfelves fulfil God's word (which once commanded all things to be good, and approved them to be fo) by yielding manifold fervices to us; in brufhing and cleanfing the air for our health, in driving forward our fhips, (which without their friendly help could not ftir,) in gathering together, in fcattering, in fpreading abroad the clouds; the clouds, thofe paths of God, *which drop fatnefs* upon our fields and paftures. As for our living fubjects, all the inferior forts of animals, it is hardly poffible to reckon the manifold benefits we receive from them; how many ways they fupply our needs with pleafant food and convenient clothing, how they eafe our labour, how they promote even our recreation and fport. Thus have all things upon this earth (as is fit and feemly they fhould have) by the wife and gracious difpofal of the great Creator, a reference to the benefit of its nobleft inhabitant

Pf. cxlviii. 8.

Pf. lxv. 11, 12, &c.

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moſt worthy and moſt able to uſe them: many of them have an immediate reference to man, (as neceſſary to his being, or conducible to his well-being; being fitted hereto, to his hand, without his care, ſkill, or labour,) others a reference to him, more mediate indeed, yet as reaſonable to ſuppoſe; I mean ſuch things, whoſe uſefulneſs doth in part depend upon the exerciſe of our reaſon, and the inſtruments ſubſervient thereto: for what is uſeful by the help of reaſon, doth as plainly refer to the benefit of a thing naturally endowed with that faculty, as what is agreeable to ſenſe refers to a thing merely ſenſitive: we may therefore, for inſtance, as reaſonably ſuppoſe, that iron was deſigned for our uſe, though firſt we be put to dig for it, then muſt employ many arts, and much pains before it become fit for our uſe; as that the ſtones were therefore made, which lie open to our view; and which without any preparation we eaſily apply to the pavement of our ſtreets, or the raiſing of our fences: alſo, the grain we ſow in our grounds, or the trees which we plant in our orchards, we have reaſon to conceive as well provided for us, as thoſe plants which grow wildly and ſpontaneouſly; for that ſufficient means are beſtowed on us of compaſſing ſuch ends, and rendering thoſe things uſeful to us, (a reaſon able to contrive what is neceſſary in order thereto, and a hand ready to execute,) it being alſo reaſonable, that ſomething ſhould be left for the improvement of our reaſon, and employment of our induſtry, left our nobleſt powers ſhould languiſh and decay by ſloth, or want of fit exerciſe.

Epiſ. i. 16.

—Pater ipſe colendi Haud facilem eſſe viam voluit, &c.—Curis acuens mortalia corda. *Virg.*

Well then, is it to a fortuitous neceſſity (or a neceſſary chance) that we owe all theſe choice accommodations and preeminences of nature? muſt we bleſs and worſhip Fortune for all this? did ſhe ſo eſpecially love us, and tender our good? was ſhe ſo indulgent toward us, ſo provident for us in ſo many things, in every thing; making us the ſcope of all her workings and motions here about us? Muſt we change ſtyle, and ſay, Fortune pours down bleſſings on our heads, Fortune crowns us with lovingkindneſs, Fortune daily loads us with her benefits? Shall we

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not only esteem these good things her gifts, but even acknowledge ourselves her offsprings, and reverence her as our mother; disclaiming so noble a parent, as Wisdom Omnipotent; disowning so worthy a benefactor, as Sovereign Goodness? O brutish degeneracy! O hellish depravedness of mind! Are we not, not only wretchedly blind and stupid, if we are not able to discern so clear beams of wisdom shining through so many perspicuous correspondences; if we cannot trace the Divine power by footsteps so express and remarkable; if we cannot read so legible characters of transcendent goodness; but extremely unworthy and ungrateful, if we are not ready to acknowledge, and with hearty thankfulness to celebrate all these excellent perfections, by which all these things have been so ordered, as to conspire and cooperate for our benefit? Methinks the very perception of so much good, the continual enjoyment of so many accommodations, the frequent satisfaction of so many senses and appetites, should put us in so good humour, that when we feel our hearts replenished with food and gladness, when we so delightfully relish nature's dainties, when we with pleasure view this fair scene of things, when our ears are ravished with harmonious sounds, when our spirits are exhilarated with those natural perfumes shed about our gardens, our woods, and our fields, we should not be able to forbear devoutly crying out with the Psalmist; *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches: The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy and bounty: Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him?* that *thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, and hast put all things under his feet?* Under his feet; and such in a manner, according to proper and direct meaning, are all those things which we have as yet touched upon; so many arguments of the Divinity even looking downwards, as it were, (if we do not so look rather like beasts than men,) we may upon this little spot of our habitation perceive: but if, employing our peculiar advantage, we lift up our

Οὐχ ἑαυτὸν ἀμάρτυρον ἀφῆκεν, ἀγαθοποιῶν, &c. Acts xiv. 17.

Acts xiv. 17.

Ps. civ. 24.

Ps. cxix. 64.

xxxiii. 5.

viii. 4.

cxliv. 3.

Ps. viii. 6.

eyes and minds towards heaven, there in a larger volume, and in a brighter character, we ſhall behold the teſtimonies of perfection, and majeſty ſtupendous deſcribed: as our eyes are dazzled with the radiant light coming thence, ſo muſt the vaſt amplitude, the ſtately beauty, the decent order, the ſteady courſe, the beneficial efficacy of thoſe glorious lamps aſtoniſh our minds, fixing their attention upon them: he that ſhall, I ſay, conſider with what preciſe regularity, and what perfect conſtancy thoſe (beyond our imagination) vaſt bodies perform their rapid motions, what pleaſure, comfort, and advantage their light and heat do yield us, how their kindly influences conduce to the general preſervation of all things here below, (impregnating the womb of this cold and dull lump of earth with various ſorts of life, with ſtrange degrees of activity,) how neceſſary (or how convenient at leaſt) the certain recourſes of ſeaſons made by them are; how can he but wonder, and wondering adore that tranſcendency of beneficent wiſdom and power, which firſt diſpoſed them into, which ſtill preſerves them in, ſuch a ſtate and order? That all of them ſhould be ſo regulated, as for ſo many ages together, (even through all memories of time,) to perſiſt in the ſame poſture, to retain the ſame appearances, not to alter diſcernibly in magnitude, in ſhape, in ſituation, in diſtance each from other; but to abide fixed, as it were, in their unfixedneſs, and ſteady in their reſtleſs motions; not to vary at all ſenſibly in the time of their revolution, (ſo that one year was ever obſerved to differ in an hour, or one day in a minute from another,) doth it not argue a conſtant will directing them, and a mighty hand upholding them[m]? it did ſo, Plutarch tells us, to the common apprehenſions of men in ancient times; who

[m] Ordo autem ſiderum et in omni æternitate conſtantia neque naturam ſignificat; eſt enim plena rationis: neque fortunam, quæ amica varietati conſtantiam reſpuit. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 16.

Οὐδέποτε ὅν ἐν χειμῶνι μακρὰ γίγνεται ἡ ἡμέρα, ὥσπερ οὐδέποτε ἐν θέρει μακρὰ γίγνεται ἡ νύξ, τοσούτων παραλλαττόντων γενεῶν· ἀλλὰ ἐν τοσούτῳ διαστήματι καὶ μήκει, οὐδὲ ἀκριβείᾳ, οὐχ ἡμιώριον, οὐ βιπὴν ὀφθαλμοῦ ἡ ἑτέρα τὴν ἑτέραν ἐπλεονέκτησε. *Chryſ.* Ἀνδρ. θ'.

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from these observations deduced the existence and notion of a God; because, saith he, *they took notice that the sun, the moon, and the rest of the stars, taking their course about the earth, did constantly arise alike in their colours, equal in their bignesses, in the same places, and at the same times*[n]. Reason dictated to them what the inspired Psalmist sings concerning the heavenly host; that God *commanded, and they were created; he hath also stablished them for ever and ever, by a decree that shall not pass.* And surely, those celestial squadrons could never be ranged in a form so proper, and march on so regularly without the marshalling, and without the conduct of a most skilful captain. He that can seriously ascribe all this to an undisciplined and unconducted troop of atoms rambling up and down confusedly through the field of infinite space, what might he not as easily assert or admit? Certainly, he that can think so, can think any thing; and labour were vainly spent in farther endeavour to convince him. So even Pagan philosophers have judged; upon whom what impression this consideration hath made, we may learn from these words of one among them, Cicero: *Who*, saith he, *would call him a man, that beholding such certain motions of heaven, thus settled ranks of stars, all things there so connected and suited together, should deny there were a reason in them, or should affirm those things done by chance, which by no understanding we can reach with how great counsel they are performed?* And, *What other thing*, adds he, *can be so open and so perspicuous, to us that shall behold the heavens and contemplate things celestial, as that there is a most excellent Divinity, by which these things are governed*[o]? Thus do *the heavens declare the glory of God,*

Ps. cxlvii. 5, 6.

Isa. xl. 26. xlv. 12. Dan. iv. 35. Neh. ix. 6.

Ps. xix. 1.

[n] Ἀεί τι γὰρ ἥλιος καὶ σελήνη, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἄστρων τὴν ὑπόγειον φορὰν ἐπιχθόνιος ὅμοια μὲν ἀνατέλλει τοῖς χρώμασιν, ἴσα δὲ τοῖς μεγέθεσι, καὶ κατὰ τόπους, καὶ κατὰ χρόνους τοὺς αὐτούς. *Plut. de Plac.* i. 6.

[o] Quis hunc hominem dixerit, qui cum tam certos cœli motus, tam ratos astrorum ordines, tamque inter se connexa et apta viderit, neget his ullam inesse rationem, eaque casu fieri dicat, quæ quanto consilio gerantur, nullo consilio assequi possumus? *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 38.

Quid potest esse tam apertum, tamque perspicuum, cum cœlum suspexi-

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Neh. ix. 6. Isa. xxxvii. 16.

and the firmament sheweth his handywork: yea, thus we have reason to acknowledge with Nehemiah; *Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein; and thou preserveſt them all.* Thus, every thing above and below us, before and behind, on this, on that, on every side of us, yields more than a simple attestation to the existence of its glorious Maker; each of them singly, several of them together, giving their vote and suffrage thereto [p].

III. Yea, which was the last consideration intimated, all of them join together in one universal consort, with one harmonious voice, to proclaim one and the same wisdom to have designed, one and the same power to have produced, one and the same goodness to have set both wisdom and power on work in designing and in producing their being; in preserving and governing it [q]: for this whole system of things what is it, but one goodly body, as it were, compacted of several members and organs; so aptly compacted together, that each confers its being and its operation to the grace and ornament, to the strength and stability of the whole; one soul (of Divine providence) enlivening in a manner, and actuating it all? Survey it all over, and we shall have reason to say with the philosopher; *All the parts of the world are so constituted, that they could not be either better for use, nor more beautiful for shew* [r]. In it we shall espy nothing in substance superfluous or defective; nothing in shape de-

mus, cœlestisque contemplati sumus, quam aliquod esse numen præstantissimæ mentis, quo hæc regantur? *Ibid.* ii. 2.

Τὶ οὖν ἔστι ἄθλιος ἢ ταλαίπωρος, ὃς ἐρῶν μὲν ἐρανὸν, ἐρῶν δὲ θάλασσαν ἢ γῆν, ἐρῶν δὲ τοσούτων ἄλλων εὐπρεπείαν ἔτυμος ἀκρόᾳ, ἢ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἀλάστωρος τάξιν, πρίζων αἰνιγμάτων ταῦτα γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ μὴ προσκυνῶν τὸν ἅπαντα ταῦτα μετὰ τέχνης τῆς προνοούσης διακοσμήσαντα; *Chrys.* Ἀνδρ. Θ'.

[p] Quocunque te flexeris, ibi Deum videbis occurrentem tibi, &c. *Sen. de Benef.* iv. 8.

[q] —— *ἰσόμετρον ὡς ἀγαθὸς τὸ χρέων, ὡς σοφὸς τὸ κάλλιστον, ὡς δυνατὸς τὸ μέγιστον.* *Bas. Hexaem.* λ. α.

[r] Omnes mundi partes ita constitutæ sunt, ut neque ad usum meliores potuerint esse, nec ad speciem pulchriores. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 34.

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formed, in position misplaced, in motion exorbitant, so as to prejudice the beauty or welfare of the whole[s]. We may perhaps not discern the use of each part, or the tendency of each particular effect; but of many they are so plain and palpable, that reason obliges us to suppose the like of the rest. Even as a person whom we observe frequently to act with great consideration and prudence, when at other times we cannot penetrate the drift of his proceedings, we must yet imagine that he hath some latent reason, some reach of policy, that we are not aware of; or, as in an engine consisting of many parts, curiously combined, whereof we do perceive the general use, and apprehend how divers parts thereof conduce thereto, reason prompts us (although we neither see them all, nor can comprehend the immediate serviceableness of some) to think they are all in some way or other subservient to the artist's design: such an agent is God, the wisdom of whose proceedings being in so many instances notorious, we ought to suppose it answerable in the rest; such an engine is this world, of which we may easily enough discern the general end, and how many of its parts do conduce thereto; and cannot therefore in reason but suppose the rest in their kind alike congruous, and conducible to the same purpose: our incapacity to discover all doth not argue any defect, but an excess of wisdom in the design thereof; not too little perfection in the work, but too great an one rather, in respect to our capacity: however, we plainly see the result of all to be the durable continuance of things, without interruption or change, in the same constant uniform state; which shews, that in the world there is no seed of corruption, as it were; [t] no inclination to dissolution or decay; nothing that tends to the discomposure or destruction of the whole: each ingredient thereof (of

[s] Μηδὲν ἡ φύσις ποιεῖ μάτην, μηδὲ ἀπολείπει τῶν ἀναγκαίων. *Arist.* iii. *de Anim.* cap. 10.

[t] Ῥύσεις καὶ ἀλλοιώσεις ἀναιροῦσι τὸν κόσμον διηνεκῶς. *Anton.* vi. 15. xii. 13.

Αἱ μὲν γενέσεις ἐπαναστέλλουσι τὰς φθορὰς, αἱ δὲ φθοραὶ κουφίζουσι τὰς γενέσεις· μία δ' ἐκ πάντων περαινομένων σωτηρία διατελεῖ. *Auct. de Mund.* cap. v.

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those so unconceivably numerous) consists within its proper limits; not encroaching immoderately upon, not devouring or disturbing another in its course; contrary qualities therein serving to a due temperament, opposite inclinations begetting a just poise, particular vicissitudes conferring to a general settlement; private deaths and corruptions maintaining the public life and health, producing a kind of youthful vigour in the whole: so that six thousand years together hath this great machine stood, always one and the same, unimpaired in its beauty, unworn in its parts, unwearied and undisturbed in its motions [u]. If then, as Plutarch says, *no fair thing is ever produced by hazard, but with art framing it* [x]; how could this most fair comprehension of all fair things be not the lawful issue of art, but a by-blow of fortune; of fortune, the mother only of broods monstrous and misshapen? [y] If the nature of any cause be discoverable by its effects; if from any work we may infer the workman's ability; if in any case the results of wisdom are distinguishable from the consequences of chance, we have reason to believe, that the Architect of this magnificent and beautiful frame was one incomprehensibly wise, powerful, and good Being; and to conclude with Cicero, *Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque naturam, et eam suspiciendam, adorandamque hominum generi pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cælestium cogit confiteri;* the sense of which saying we cannot better render or express, than in St. Paul's words, *The invisible things of God by the making* (or rather by the make and constitution) *of the world are clearly seen,*

Κόσμος καλὸν ποίημα τίκτουσα τύχη. *Eurip.*

Cic. ii. de Nat. Deor. pag. 89.

Ἀρχοτέχνας. Epitheton Dei. *Pind.*

Rom. i. 20.

[u] Omnia pereundo servantur; omnia de interitu reformantur, &c. *Tertull. Apol.* cap. 48.

Ὁ μέγας καὶ θαυμαστὸς τῶν μεγαλείων αὐτοῦ πόρος. *Greg. Naz. Or.* 48.

——Ἕκαστον μίαν καθάπερ τινὶ χαλινῷ καὶ δεσμῷ τῷ βουλήματι τοῦ ποιήσαντος τὴν οἰκείαν διαφυλάττουσι δρόμον, καὶ ἡ μάχη τούτων εἰρήνης εἰρήνη γίνεται τῷ παντί. *Chrys. Orat.* 47, 48. tom. vi.

[x] Οὐδὲν τῶν καλῶν ἀπὸ τύχης γίνεται, ἀλλὰ μετά τινος τέχνης δημιουργούσης. *Plut. de Plac.* i. 6.

[y] Quod si mundum efficere potest concursus atomorum, cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest, quæ sunt multo minus operosa, et multo quidem faciliora? *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 37.

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being underſtood by the things that are made, even his et nal power and Godhead; ſo that, I adjoin after him, *t are inexcuſable, who* from hence *do not know God;* knowing him do not render unto him his due glory a ſervice.

I Believe in God,

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THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM THE FRAME OF HUMAN NATURE.

GEN. i. 27.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.

THE belief of God's existence is the foundation of all religion, if which be not well laid in our minds by convincing reasons, the superstructures standing thereon may easily be in danger of being shaken and ruined; especially being assailed by the winds of temptation and opposition, which every where blow so violently in this irreligious age. No discourses therefore can perhaps be more needful, (or seasonably useful,) than such as do produce and urge reasons of that kind, apt to establish that foundation. Of such there be, I conceive, none better, or more suitable to common capacity, than those, which are drawn from effects apparent to men's general observation and experience, the which cannot reasonably be ascribed to any other cause, than unto God; that is, (according to the notion commonly answering to that name,) to a Being incomprehensibly wise, powerful, and good. Of such effects there be innumerably many in this sensible world among things natural, more strictly so called, that is, sub-

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ſifting and acting without immediate uſe of underſtanding or choice; the conſtitutions and operations of which (being evidently directed according to very much reaſon, and to very good purpoſe) do evince their being framed and ordered by ſuch a Being; as I have formerly, with a competent largeneſs, endeavoured to ſhew. But beſide thoſe, there is expoſed to our obſervation, yea ſubject to our inward conſcience, another ſort of beings, acting in another manner, and from other principles; having in them a ſpring of voluntary motion and activity; not, as the reſt, neceſſarily determined, or driven on, by a kind of blind violence, in one direct road to one certain end; but guiding themſelves with judgment and choice, by ſeveral ways, toward divers ends; briefly, endued with reaſon, to know what and why; and with liberty, to chooſe what and how they ſhould act; and that this ſort of beings (that is, we ourſelves, all mankind) did proceed from the ſame ſource or original cauſe, as it is in way of hiſtory delivered and affirmed in our text, ſo I ſhall now endeavour by reaſon (apt to perſuade even thoſe, who would not allow this ſacred authority) to ſhew. Indeed, if the

Rom. i. 20. *eternal power and divinity of God may*, as St. Paul tells us, *be ſeen in all the works of God;* the ſame peculiarly and principally will appear obſervable in this maſterpiece, as it were, of the great Artificer; if the meaneſt creatures reflect ſomewhat of light, by which we may diſcern the Divine exiſtence and perfections; in this fine and beſt poliſhed mirror we ſhall more clearly diſcover the ſame: no where ſo much of God will appear as in this work, which was deſignedly formed to reſemble and repreſent him. This then is the ſubject of our preſent diſcourſe, That in man, well conſidered, we may diſcern manifeſt footſteps of that incomprehenſibly excellent Being, impreſſed upon him; and this doubly, both in each man ſingly taken, and in men as ſtanding in conjunction or relation to each other: conſidering man's nature, we ſhall have reaſon to think it to have proceeded from God; conſidering human ſocieties, we ſhall ſee cauſe to ſuppoſe them deſigned and governed by God.

1. Consider we first any one single man, or that human nature abstractedly, whereof each individual person doth partake; and whereas that doth consist of two parts, one material and external, whereby man becomes a sensible part of nature, and hath an eminent station among visible creatures; the other, that interior and invisible principle of operations peculiarly called human: as to the former, we did, among other such parts of nature, take cognisance thereof, and even in that discovered plain marks of a great wisdom that made it, of a great goodness taking care to maintain it. The other now we shall chiefly consider, in which we may discern not only σημεῖα, but ὁμοιώματα, of the Divine existence and efficiency; not only large tracks, but express footsteps; not only such signs as smoke is of fire, or a picture of the painter that drew it; but even such, as the spark is of fire, and the picture of its original.

1. And first, that man's nature did proceed from some efficient cause, it will (as of other things in nature) be reasonable to suppose. For if not so, then it must either spring up of itself, so that at some determinate beginning of time, or from all eternity, some one man, or some number of men did of themselves exist; or there hath been a succession, without beginning, of continual generations indeterminate, (not terminated in any root, one or more, of singular persons.)

Now generally, that man did not at any time in any manner spring up of himself, appears, 1. From history and common tradition; which (as we shall otherwhere largely shew) deliver the contrary; being therein more credible than bare conjecture or precarious assertion, destitute of testimony or proof. 2. From the present constant manner of man's production, which is not by spontaneous emergency, but in way of successive derivation, according to a method admirably provided for by nature. 3. Because if ever man did spring up of himself, it should be reasonable that at any time, that often, that at least sometime in so long a course of times, the like should happen, which yet no experience doth attest. 4. There is an evident re-

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lation between our bodies and ſouls; the members and organs of our bodies being wonderfully adapted to ſerve the operations of our ſouls. Now in our bodies (as we have before ſhewed) there appear plain arguments of a moſt wiſe Author, that contrived and framed them; therefore in no likelihood did our ſouls ariſe of themſelves, but owe their being to the ſame wiſe Cauſe.

Alſo particularly, that not any men did at ſome beginning of time ſpring up of themſelves is evident, becauſe there is even in the thing itſelf a repugnance; and it is altogether unconceivable that any thing, which once hath not been, ſhould ever come to be without receiving its being from another: and ſuppoſing ſuch a riſe of any thing, there could not in any caſe be any need of an efficient cauſe; ſince any thing might purely out of nothing come to be of itſelf.

Neither could any man ſo exiſt from eternity, both from the general reaſons aſſigned, which being grounded in the nature of the thing, and including no reſpect to this circumſtance of now and then, do equally remove this ſuppoſition, (for what is in itſelf unapt or unneceſſary or improbable to be now, was always alike ſo; the being from eternity or in time not altering the nature of the thing;) and alſo particularly, becauſe there are no footſteps or monuments of man's (not to ſay eternal, but even) ancient ſtanding in the world; but rather many good arguments (otherwhere touched) of his late coming thereinto; which conſideration did even convince Epicurus and his followers, and made them acknowledge man to be a novel production. I add, ſeeing it is neceſſary to ſuppoſe ſome eternal and ſelf-ſubſiſtent Being diſtinct from man, and from any other particular ſenſible being, (for there is no ſuch being, which in reaſon can be ſuppoſed author of the reſt; but rather all of them bear characters ſignifying their original from a Being more excellent than themſelves;) and ſuch an one being admitted, there is no need or reaſon to ſuppoſe any other, (eſpecially man and all others appearing unapt ſo to ſubſiſt,) therefore it is not reaſonable to aſcribe eternal ſelf-ſub-

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ſiſtence to man. This diſcourſe I confirm with the ſuffrage of Ariſtotle himſelf; who in his Phyſicks hath theſe words: *In natural things, that which is definite and better, if poſſible, muſt rather exiſt: but it ſuffices, that one, the firſt of things immoveable, being eternal, ſhould be to others the original of motion*[a]; (I ſubjoin, and by parity of reaſon it is ſufficient, that one and the beſt thing be eternally ſubſiſtent of itſelf, and the cauſe of ſubſiſtence to the reſt.)

As for the laſt ſuppoſition, that there have been indeterminate ſucceſſions of men, without beginning, it is alſo liable to moſt of the former exceptions, beſide that it is altogether unintelligible, and its having this peculiar difficulty in it, that it aſcribes determinate effects to cauſes indeterminate. And indeed it hath been to no other purpoſe introduced, than to evade the arguments ariſing from the nature of the thing, by confounding the matter with impertinent intrigues, ſuch as the terms of infinite and indeterminate muſt neceſſarily produce in man's ſhallow underſtanding. I therefore, upon ſuch grounds, aſſume it as a reaſonable ſuppoſition, that man's nature is nowiſe *αὐτοφυὴς, but hath proceeded from ſome cauſe.

(* hath not ſprung up of itſelf.)

2. I adjoin, ſecondly, that it could not come from any ſenſible or material cauſe, nor from any complication of ſuch cauſes; for that the properties, the powers, the operations of man's ſoul are wholly different from in kind, highly elevated in worth, above all the properties, powers, and operations of things corporeal, in what imaginable manner ſoever framed or tempered: the properties, faculties, and operations of our ſouls are, or refer to, ſeveral ſorts or ways of knowledge, (ſenſe, fancy, memory, diſcourſe, mental intuition;) of willing, (that is, of appetite toward and choice of good, or of diſliking and refuſing evil;) of paſſion, (that is, of ſenſible complacency or diſpleaſure in reſpect to good and evil apprehended under ſeveral notions and circumſtances;) of *αὐτοκινησία*, or ſelf-moving, (the power and act of moving without

[a] Ἐν γὰρ τοῖς φύσει δεῖ τὸ πεπερασμένον, καὶ τὸ βέλτιστον, ἐὰν ἐνδέχηται, ὑπάρχειν μᾶλλον· ἱκανὸν δὲ καὶ εἰ ἕν, τὸ πρῶτον τῶν ἀκινήτων ἀΐδιον ὄν, ἔσται τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀρχὴ κινήσεως. *Phyſ.* viii. 7.

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any force extrinſecal working upon it.) The general properties of things corporeal are extenſion according to ſeveral dimenſions and figures; aptneſs to receive motion from, or to impart motion unto, each other in ſeveral degrees and proportions of velocity; to divide and unite, or to be divided and united each by other; and the like, coherent with and reſulting from thoſe: now to common ſenſe it ſeems evident, that thoſe properties and theſe are *toto genere* different from each other; nor have any conceivable ſimilitude unto, connection with, dependence upon each other, as to their immediate nature. Let any part of this corporeal maſs be refined by the ſubtleſt diviſion, let it be agitated by the quickeſt motion, let it be modelled into what ſhape or faſhion you pleaſe; how can any man imagine either knowledge or appetite or paſſion thence to reſult? or that it ſhould thence acquire a power of moving itſelf, or another adjacent body? Even, I ſay, this inferior locomotive faculty is too high for matter, by any change it can undergo, to obtain: for we (as inward experience, or conſcience of what we do may teach us) determine ourſelves commonly to action, and move the corporeal inſtruments ſubject to our will and command, not by force of any precedent bodily impreſſion or impulſe, but either according to mere pleaſure, or in virtue of ſomewhat ſpiritual and abſtracted from matter, acting upon us, not by a phyſical energy, but by moral repreſentation, in a manner more eaſily conceived than expreſſed; (for no man ſurely is ſo dull, that he cannot perceive a huge difference between being dragged by a violent hand, and drawn to action by a ſtrong reaſon; although it may puzzle him to expreſs that difference:) ſuch a propoſition of truth, ſuch an apprehenſion of events poſſible, ſuch an appearance of good or evil conſequent, (things no where exiſtent without us, nor having in them any thing of corporeal ſubſiſtence; nor therefore capable of corporeal operation,) are all the engines that uſually impel us to action; and theſe, by a voluntary application of our minds, (by collecting and digeſting, ſevering and rejecting, ſifting and moulding the preſent ſingle repreſent-

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tions of things, by an immediate interior power, independent from any thing without us,) we frame within ourselves. And even such a self-moving or self-determining power we cannot anywise conceive to be in, or to arise from, any part of this corporeal mass, however shaped or sized, however situated or agitated: much less can we well apprehend the more noble faculties to be seated in or to spring from it; of them the grossest and the finest, the slowest and the nimblest, the roughest and the smoothest bodies are alike capable, or rather unlike, incapable. To think a gross body may be ground and pounded into rationality, a slow body may be thumped and driven into passion, a rough body may be filed and polished into a faculty of discerning and resenting things; that a cluster of pretty thin round atoms, (as Democritus forsooth conceited,) that a well mixed combination of elements, (as Empedocles fancied,) that a harmonious contemperation (or crasis) of humours, (as Galen, dreaming it seems upon his drugs and his potions, would persuade us,) that an implement made up of I know not what fine springs, and wheels, and such mechanic knacks, (as some of our modern wizards have been busy in divining,) should, without more to do, become the subject of so rare capacities and endowments, the author of actions so worthy, and works so wonderful; capable of wisdom and virtue, of knowledge so vast, and of desires so lofty; apt to contemplate truth, and affect good; able to recollect things past, and to foresee things future; to search so deep into the causes of things, and disclose so many mysteries of nature; to invent so many arts and sciences, to contrive such projects of policy, and achieve such feats of prowess; briefly, should become capable to design, undertake, and perform all those admirable effects of human wit and industry which we daily see and hear of; how senseless and absurd conceits are these! how can we, without great indignation and regret, entertain such suppositions! No, no; it is both ridiculous fondness and monstrous baseness for us to own any parentage from, or any alliance to, things so mean, so very much below us. It is indeed ob-

Arist. de An. i. 2.

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servable, that no man can well, or scarce any man hath disowned the receiving his being from God, but hath also in a manner disavowed his own being what he is; that no man denying God, hath not also withal denied himself; denied himself to be a man; renounced his reason, his liberty, and other perfections of his nature; rather than acknowledge himself so well descended, hath been ready to confess himself no more than a beast, yea much less than probably beasts are; a mere corporeal machine, a ball of fate and chance, a thing violently tossed and tumbled up and down by bodies all about it. But let these degenerate men vilify their own nature, and disparage themselves as they please, yet those noble perfections of our soul speak its extraction from a higher stock; we cannot, if we consider them well, but acknowledge that,

Mentem e cœlesti demissam traximus arce;

or, as Epicharmus said of old, that *man's reason did sprout from the Divine reason*; they plainly discover their original to be from a cause itself understanding and knowing, willing freely, resenting things, (if I may so speak,) and moving of itself in a more excellent manner and degree.

Ὁ γὰρ δὴ τ' ἀνθρώπου λόγος πέφυκ' ἀπὸ τοῦ θείου λόγου. *Epic. Cl. Alex. Ser.* v. pag. 441.

And indeed it is very considerable to our purpose, that while we assert the existence of God, we assert no other thing to be, than such as whereof we can assign a manifest instance or example, as it were, although in degree much inferior; for what can in any degree exist, it is not hard to conceive that possible to exist in any degree, how high soever; what is in kind possible, is in any perfection of degree possible; yea, what we see in a lower degree somewhere to exist, doth probably otherwhere exist in higher perfection. There is therefore scarce any attribute commonly ascribed to God, the existence whereof we cannot shew possible, yea very credible, by shewing some degree, (I use this word in a large and popular sense, not regarding scholastical nicety,) some participation, some semblance (or, if you please, some shadow) thereof discernible in man; he being indeed a small picture, as it were, wherein God hath drawn and represented himself, giving us to read that of himself in this small volume, which in its proper

character and size we could never be able to apprehend; each letter, each line of his excellency being in itself too large for our eye perfectly to view and comprehend.

3. We are, I say, not only God's works, but his children; our souls bearing in their countenance and complexion divers express features of him; especially as at first they were made, and as by improvement of our capacities they may again become. [b] In the substance of man's soul, in its union with things corporeal, in its properties and powers, we may observe divers such resemblances, declaring it in a manner to be what Seneca did say of it, *a little God harboured in human body*. For as God, (*inhabiting light inaccessible*,) being himself invisible, and subject to no sense, discovers himself by manifold effects of wisdom and power; so doth our soul, itself immediately exposed to no sense, shew itself by many works of art and industry, wherein she imitates nature and the works of God; although her works in fineness and greatness do indeed come infinitely short of his.

Deus in humano corpore hospitans.

As God by his presence and influence doth, as the philosopher speaks, *contain and keep together the whole frame of things*, so that he withdrawing them, it would fall of itself into corruption and ruin; so doth the soul, by its union and secret energy upon the body, connect the parts of its body, and preserve it from dissolution, which presently, they being removed, do follow.

Περιέχει πᾶσαν φύσιν. *Arist. de Mundo.*

Δοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ τὸ σῶμα συνέχειν· ἐξιλθούσης οὖν διασπείρεται καὶ σήπεται. *Arist. de An.* i. 4.

As he, in a manner beyond our conception, without any proper extension or composition of parts, doth coexist with, penetrateth, and passeth through all things;

b ————quid mirum noscere mundum
Si possunt homines, quibus est et mundus in ipsis,
Exemplumque Dei quisque est in imagine parva? *Manil.* 4.

Trismeg. χ'. Διὸ τολμητέον ἐστὶν, τὸν μὲν ἄνθρωπον ἐπίγειον, εἶναι θεὸν θνητόν· τὸν δὲ οὐράνιον εἶναι θεὸν, ἀθάνατον ἄνθρωπον.

Quem in hoc mundo locum Deus obtinet, hunc in homine animus; quod est illoc materia, id in nobis corpus est. *Sen. Ep.* 65.

Deum te scito esse: siquidem Deus est, qui viget, qui sentit, qui meminit, qui providet, qui tam regit, et movet, et moderatur id corpus, cui præpositus est, quam hunc mundum princeps ille Deus; et ut ipsum mundum ex quadam parte mortalem Deus æternus, sic fragile corpus animus sempiternus movet. *Cic. in Somn. Scip.*

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[c] so is she, in a manner also unconceivable, every where present within her bounds, and penetrates all the dimensions of her little world.

As he incomprehensibly, by a word of his mind, or by a mere act of will, doth move the whole frame or any part of nature; so doth she, we cannot tell how, by thinking only, and by willing, wield her body, and determine any member thereof to motion.

As he, not confined by the extension or duration of things, doth at one simple view behold all things, not only present, but past and future, yea, whenever, wherever, however possible; [d] so doth she, making wide excursions out of her narrow mansion in an instant, as it were, or with a marvellous agility, transcend any fixed bounds of time or place; surveys in her thought the most remote regions, stopping no where, and passing over the world's bounds into spaces void and imaginary; reviews ages long since past, and looks forward into those long after to come; sees things in their causes, and, as it were, beyond them, even the possibilities of things that never shall be.

Ὁ θεὸς οὐδὲν μάτην ποιεῖ. *Arist.*

As he performs nothing rashly or vainly, but always with wisest design to the best end; so doth she never set herself on action without some drift, or aim at good apparent to her.

[e] As he among all the agitations and changes of things without him abides himself immoveable, impassible, and immutable; so is she, immediately at least, not disturbed, not altered, not affected by the various motions that surround her; they do not touch her, they cannot stir her; among the many tumults and tempests blustering all

[c] Ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τοῖς τῆς διανοίας κινήμασι πάσῃ κατ' ἐξουσίαν ἐφαπλοῦται τῇ κτίσει, καὶ μέχρις οὐρανῶν ἀνιοῦσα, καὶ τῶν ἀβύσσων ἐπιβατεύουσα, καὶ τῷ πλάτει τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐπιεχομένη, &c. *Greg. Nyss. Cat.* c. 10.

[d] Magna et generosa res est humanus animus, in immensum se extendit, nec ullos sibi poni nisi communes cum Deo terminos patitur. *Sen. Ep.* 102.

Πῶς μετρῇ τόπῳ, καὶ νοῦς οὐ χωρίζεται, ἀλλ' ἐν ταυτῷ μένων πάντα ἐπέχεται; *Greg. Naz. Or.* 26.

[e] Τάξας λογικῷ καὶ ἀλόγου κράματος τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ζῶον λογικὸν συνεστήσατο, ᾧ συνίδησι μυστικῶς τε καὶ ἀῤῥήτως τὸν χοῦν τῷ νοῖ, καὶ τὸν νοῦν τῷ πνεύματι. *Greg. Naz. Or.* 26.

about her, ſhe can retain a ſteady calm and reſt: Ariſtotle himſelf concluded her to be unmoveable, impaſſible, unmixed, and uncompounded [f].) So fair characters are there of the Divine nature engraven upon man's ſoul: but one chief property thereof we have not as yet touched; whereof, alas! the lineaments are more faint and leſs diſcernible; they being in themſelves originally moſt tender and delicate, and thence apt by our unhappy degeneration to ſuffer the moſt, and have thence accordingly been moſt defaced; goodneſs I mean; whereof yet, I ſhall not doubt to ſay, many goodly relics are extant, and may be obſerved therein. There do remain, diſperſed in the ſoil of human nature, divers ſeeds of goodneſs, of benignity, of ingenuity, which being cheriſhed, excited, and quickened by good culture, do, to common experience, thruſt out flowers very lovely, yield fruits very pleaſant of virtue and goodneſs. We ſee that even the generality of men are prone to approve the laws and rules directing to juſtice, ſincerity, and beneficence; to commend actions ſuitable unto them, to honour perſons practiſing according to them; as alſo to diſtaſte, deteſt, or deſpiſe ſuch men, whoſe principles or tempers incline them to the practice of injury, fraud, malice, and cruelty [g]; yea, even them men generally are apt to diſlike, who are ſo addicted to themſelves, as to be backward to do good to others. Yea no man can act according to thoſe rules of juſtice and goodneſs without ſatisfaction of mind; no man can do againſt them without inward ſelf-condemnation and regret, (as St. Paul did obſerve for us.) No man hardly is ſo ſavage, in whom the receiving kindneſſes doth not beget a kindly ſenſe, and an inclination (*eo nomine*, for that cauſe barely) to return the like; which inclination can-

Rom. ii. 15.

[f] Ἔν τι τῶν ἀδυνάτων τὸ ὑπάρχειν αὐτῇ κίνησιν. *de An.* i. 3. ἀπαθής. *de An.* i. 5. iii. 5, 6, &c. ἀμιγής, ἁπλοῦς. iii. 6, &c.

[g] Quæ autem natio non comitatem, non benignitatem, non gratum animum, et beneficii memorem diligit? quæ ſuperbos, quæ maleficos, quæ crudeles, quæ ingratos non aſpernatur, non odit? *Cic. de Leg.* i. pag. 305.

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not well be ascribed to any other principle than somewhat of ingenuity innate to man [h].

All men, I suppose, feel in themselves (if at least not hardened by villanous custom) a disposition prompting them to commiserate, yea (even with some trouble and some damage to themselves) to succour and relieve those who are in want, pain, or any distress; even mere strangers, and such from whom they can expect no return of benefit or advantage to themselves.

Many examples occur, in experience and in history, of men, who, from dictates of common reason and natural inclinations, (which in this case are not to be separated, both arising from the same source of human nature,) have been very apt freely and liberally to impart unto others somewhat of any good thing they possessed; to sacrifice their own ease, pleasure, profit unto others' benefit; to undergo great pains and hazards for public good, (the good of their family, of their friends, of their country, of mankind in general;) and all this without any hope of recompense; except perhaps that commonly they might have some regard to the approbation and acceptance, to the good-will and gratitude of them, whom their beneficence obliged; which in real esteem is no great derogation to their noble performances; and argues only, there is, together with such a laudable benignity or goodness of nature, (to excite and enliven it,) implanted a natural ambition also, or generosity in man's soul; which being well moderated seems not culpable; since God himself, in return to his most free beneficence, doth expect and require somewhat of thanks and praise; so much as we are able to render to him.

Vicit amor patriæ, laudumque cupido.

Yea, (although our adversaries will scarce admit so much, for that not supposing any good original, they are unwilling to allow any good derivative; they are as

[h] Quid tam laudabile, quid tam æqualiter in omnium animos receptum, quam referre bene meritis gratiam? *Sen. de Benef.* iv. 16.

Huic uni rei non posuimus legem, tanquam satis natura cavisset. *Ibid.* iv. 17.

eady to exclude all humanity as divinity; they have commonly, as no opinion of God, so no good opinion of men; feeling little good in themselves, they are willing to think less to be in others; so projecting to excuse themselves, and shroud their own particular faults under the covert of a general naughtiness,) [i] I doubt not to say, there have been many persons in all ages full of very single and sincere good-will toward men, heartily desiring the public good, and compassionating the evils of mankind; ready with their best endeavours to procure and promote the one, to prevent and remove the other, from principles of mere ingenuity or pure nobleness; that with unmoveable resolution have persisted in courses tending to such ends, although in them they have encountered dangers, disgraces, and troubles from the ingrateful world, or rather from some men prevalent therein, their envy or spite.

In fine, the wisest observers of man's nature have pronounced him to be a creature gentle and sociable, inclinable to and fit for conversation, apt to keep good order, to observe rules of justice, to embrace any sort of virtue, if well managed, if instructed by good discipline, if guided by good example, if living under the influence of wise laws and virtuous governors. Fierceness, rudeness, craft, malice, all perverse and intractable, all mischievous and vicious dispositions do grow among men (like weeds in any, even the best soil) and overspread the earth, from neglect of good education; from ill conduct, ill custom, ill example; (it is the comparison of St. Chrysostom and of Plutarch [k].) It is favour therefore, I conceive, to their

Ζῶον ἥμερον. Ζῶον πολιτικόν.

[i] Nec est quisquam gentis ullius, qui ducem naturam nactus ad virtutem pervenire non possit. *Cic. de Leg.* 1.

Natura nos ad mentem optimam genuit, adeoque discere meliora volentibus promptum est, ut vere intuenti mirum sit illud magis malos esse tam multos. *Quintil.* xii. 11.

[k] *Chrysost.* tom. v. pag. 613. Καθάπερ ἡ γῆ, ὅταν λιπαρὰ καὶ πίων οὖσα τυγχάνῃ μὴ γεωργῆται δὲ, πολλὴν ἐπιδείκνυται τῶν ἀκανθῶν τὴν φορὰν, οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἡ φύσις ἡ ἀμείνων καλὴ οὖσα διὰ τὸν παραγαγόντα, καὶ πρὸς τὸν τῆς ἀρετῆς καρπὸν ἐπιτηδείως ἔχουσα, &c.

Plut. de sera num. vind. pag. 978. — Εἰδὼς ὅσην μοῖραν ἀρετῆς ἐπ' αὐτοῦ φερό-

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own habitual depravations of nature (or perhaps to some prejudicate opinions) which hath induced some men to make so disadvantageous a portraiture of human nature, in which nothing lightsome or handsome, no lines of candour or rectitude do appear, but all seems black and crooked; all is drawn over with dusky shades, and irregular features of base designfulness, and malicious cunning; of suspicion, malignity, rapacity; which character were it true, (in that general extent, and not proper only to some monsters among men,) we need not farther seek for hell, since as many men, so many fiends appear unto us. But so commodious living here; so many offices daily performed among men, of courtesy, mercy, and pity; so many constant observances of friendship and amity; so many instances of fidelity and gratitude; so much credit always (even among Pagans and Barbarians) preserved to justice and humanity, (humanity, that very name doth fairly argue for us,) do sufficiently confute those defamers and slanderers of mankind; do competently evidence, that all good inclinations are not quite banished the world, nor quite razed out of man's soul; but that even herein human nature doth somewhat resemble its excellent original, the nature Divine.

Thus doth man's nature in its substance, as it were, its faculties, its manner of operation, resemble God: but we may farther observe, that as children are indeed in complexion and feature usually born somewhat like to their parents, but grow daily more like unto them, (those smaller lineaments continually with their bulk and stature increasing and becoming more discernible;) so is man improvable to more exact resemblance of God; his soul hath appetites and capacities, by which well guided and ordered, it soars and climbs continually in its affection and desire toward Divine perfection. Man hath an insa-
Eccles. i. 8. tiable curiosity and greediness of knowledge, (*his eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor his ear filled with hearing*;)

μεναι πρὸς γένεσιν ψυχαὶ βαδίζουσι, καὶ τὸ γενναῖον ὡς ἰσχυρὸν αὐτὰς, καὶ οὐκ ἐξίστηλον ἐπίφυκεν· ἐξανθεῖ δὲ παρὰ φύσιν τὴν κακίαν ὑπὸ τροφῆς, καὶ ὁμιλίας φαύλης φθειρόμενον, &c.

he never rests content with, but in a manner despises the notions already acquired; always striving to enlarge and enrich his mind with intellectual treasure. So doth he tend nearer to Divine omniscience.

And as his searches after truth, so his desires of good are in a manner boundless. No present, no definite good can long detain his liking, or fully content him: he soon doth suck it dry, and leaves it insipid; then longs and hunts after fresh entertainments: he seems poor to himself in the greatest plenty, and straitened in the most ample condition. In short, he ever aspires to somewhat more great and high than what he enjoys; finding in himself a kind of infinite (at least indefinite) ambition and covetousness, a restless tendency after farther degrees of joy and happiness, so doth he shoot himself on toward that highest mark of Divine felicity.

Being sensible of his own mortal and transitory condition, he yet seeks to live for ever in his name and memory, labours to perform memorable actions, rears lasting monuments of his art and knowledge, of his wealth and power, of his bounty and munificence, by all means studying and striving to commend himself to the regard of posterity; thus affects he another sort of likeness unto God, even a kind of immortality and eternity.

If also, being through Divine grace awakened out of that drowsy state, (which naturally in great measure hath seized upon all men,) he discovereth his moral or spiritual wants and imperfections; he is then apt to breathe and endeavour a nearer similitude to God, even in goodness, righteousness, and purity; to labour in getting continually his inclinations more rectified, and his passions better composed; in restraining, subduing, destroying inordinate self-love, with the sensuality, the perverseness, the pride, the malice growing from that evil root; in promoting all virtuous desires and affections, especially reverence toward God his father, and charity toward man his brother; neither then can he be at ease or well content, till he arrive in such dispositions of mind to that nearness of perfection which his capacities do admit. And a man thus qualified

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in degree, thus tending in desire toward higher perfec in goodness, is indeed the most lively image that can framed of God; being, as St. Paul expresseth it, *rene to an acknowledgment* (or better understanding of him of his Maker, of true goodness) *according to the imag him that made him.* I might also propound to your c sideration that φίλτρον φυσικὸν τὸ πρὸς τὸν κτίσαντα, (as ou our Fathers doth call it,) that *natural proclivity observ in man to acknowledge and worship God;* to embrace ligion both in opinion and practice, and especially on occasions of need or distress to have recourse unto him an argument of his relation to God. It is, we see, com in nature for all creatures to be readily acquainted w their parents, to run after them, to expect from th supply of wants, succour in straits, refuge and defence dangers; from hence we may easily discern to what pa any child belongs: and since there appears the like stinct and capacity innate to man, (and indeed to him al whence some philosophers thought good from this p perty to define man, a creature capable of religion[l];) i he is apt to entertain notions of God, to bear in his m awe and respect toward him; since he is ready in all straits (when other helps and hopes fail him) to lift his heart and voice toward Heaven for assistance; may we not in like manner hence discern, and with reason infer, that man is also in especial manner G child and offspring?

εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν. Colos. iii. 10.

Orig. in Cels. Testimonium animæ naturaliter religiosæ. *Tertull.*

I might also adjoin, that the very power of fran conceptions, although imperfect and inadequate, conc ing God, is in itself a faculty so very spiritual and subli that it argues something divine in man's soul. [m] *That is known by its like,* was an axiom among ancient phil phers; and that *spiritual things are spiritually discer*

1 Cor. ii. 14.

[l] Animal religionis capax.

Animus—hoc habet argumentum divinitatis suæ, quod illum divina c tant. *Sen. Nat.* quæst. 1. præf.

[m] *Arist. de An.* i. 2. γινώσκεσθαι ὁμοίῳ ὁμοίου.

Quis cœlum possit nisi cœli munere nosse,
Et reperire Deum nisi qui pars ipse deorum est? *Manil.* lib. 2.

is the rule of a better maſter in wiſdom than they; and beaſts ſurely, becauſe not endued with reaſon, have no conceptions concerning man's nature or the matters proper to him, (according to what rules, by what methods, to what purpoſes he doth act;) ſo in likelihood ſhould we not be able to apprehend and diſcourſe about things appertaining to God, his nature, the methods and reaſons of his proceedings; the notions of eternal truth, the indiſpenſable laws of right, the natural differences of good and evil, with ſuch like high objects of thought, except our ſouls had in them ſome ſparks of Divine underſtanding; ſome cognation with, and communication from, Heaven.

I ſhall to theſe only ſubjoin one farther conſideration worth attending to; that the wiſeſt and moſt conſiderate men, in ſeveral times, only by reflecting upon their own minds, and obſerving in them what was moſt lovely and excellent, moſt pure and ſtraight, have fallen upon, and conſpired in, notions concerning God, very ſuitable to thoſe which we believe taught us by revelation; although contrary to the prejudices of their education, and to popular conceits: many admirable paſſages to this purpoſe we may find dropped from the mouth of Socrates and the pen of Plato; in Cicero, in Epictetus, yea, in the leaſt credulous or fanciful of men, Ariſtotle himſelf. Whence plainly enough we may collect how near affinity there is between God and us; how legible characters of the Divinity are written upon our ſouls; how eaſily we may know God, if we be not ignorant of ourſelves; that we need not go far to fetch arguments to prove that God is, nor to find leſſons to learn what he is; ſince we always carry both about us, or rather within us; ſince our ſouls could indeed come from no other than ſuch a Being, whom they ſo reſemble and repreſent.

I have indulged my thoughts ſomewhat freely in this ſpeculation, yet I hope not altogether impertinently, for that (as I before alleged) in the chief of God's works (obſervable by us) we may reaſonably ſuppoſe that his glory doth chiefly ſhine; and will therefore be moſt diſ-

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cernible to us, if we open our eyes and apply our m thereto.

II. Thus doth human nature, being in each fing man, ſhew the exiſtence of God, as its original au and pattern; conſidering alſo men as related and c bined together in ſociety, ſome glimpſe of a Divine pc and wiſdom ordering them toward it, and preſerving t in it, may be perceived. As in the world natural, parts thereof are ſo fitted in varieties of ſize, of qualit aptitude to motion, that all may ſtick together, (exclu chaſms and vacuities,) and all cooperate inceſſantly to preſervation of that common union and harmony w was there intended; ſo in the world political we may ſerve various propenſions and aptitudes diſpoſing to collection and coherence and cooperation in ſoci They are apt to flock together, not only from a kin neceſſity, diſcovered by reaſon, for mutual help and fence; but from a natural love to company and conv tion, with an aptneſs to delight therein, and from an in averſation to that ſolitude, wherein many great appe natural to man muſt needs be ſtifled. They are alſo n velloufly fitted to maintain intercourſe not only by principal guide thereof, reaſon, but by that great in ment of it, ſpeech; whereby men impart, and, as it w transfuſe into one another, their inmoſt thoughts; w faculty doth evidently relate unto, and plainly ſhews naturally deſigned for, ſociety. In order thereto, me alſo endued with ſeveral ſubordinate inclinations and lifications (ariſing from different temper of body, or d ſition of mind) requiſite to cement ſociety, and prefe for a competent durance in peace and order; ſome being made very ſagacious and provident, and thenc to direct others; very quick and active, thence able to cute; others of a high ſpirit and courage, thence affe and diſpoſed to command; moſt others being du conceit, or heavy of temper, or of a ſoft ſpirit, and th apt to follow, content to reſt in mean ſtate, willin obey. All theſe things being ſo ordered, that even

varieties of humour in men do ſerve to ſettle them in their due place and poſture; to beget and preſerve a peaceful union, and a decent harmony of action in ſociety; which, ſuppoſing all men in ability and inclination more like or equal, (able to do, apt to affect the ſame things,) could hardly be; for then all men would be competitors and ſtrugglers for the ſame thing, and ſo none would eaſily obtain, or peacefully enjoy it.

Now ſince it is plainly beſt for man to live thus in ſociety, many great benefits thence accruing to him, (ſecurity to his life, ſafe enjoying the fruits of his induſtry, much eaſe by mutual aſſiſtance, much delight in converſation; all that civil people enjoy of convenience beyond barbarians and ſavages, or indeed above beaſts,) that men are ſo diſpoſed and ſuited thereto, is an argument of mighty wiſdom and great goodneſs in that cauſe from whence all this proceeded; and ſuch a cauſe is God.

Thus from the conſtitution of ſocieties we may collect a provident care over human affairs; the ſame alſo may be reaſonably deduced from the preſervation of them; for although man be inclined unto and fitted for ſociety, yet being an agent very free and looſe in his action, (acting contingently, and without neceſſary ſubjection to any ſettled law or rule, as do other things in nature,) no ordinary banks will conſtantly retain him in due place and order; ſo that the courſe of affairs, perverted by ſome men's irregular wills and paſſions, would run into great confuſion, did not a wiſe care alſo continually govern things, ſeaſonably interpoſing its hand, and thereby upholding, retaining, eſtabliſhing them in order, or reducing them thereinto; did not a ſuperintendent power reſtrain the fierceneſs of tyrants, the ambition of grandees, the greedineſs of oppreſſors, the wildneſs and precipitancy of factious multitudes; did not God ſometime *break the arm of the wicked*; or, as Job ſpeaks, *pour contempt upon princes*, and *weaken the ſtrength of the mighty*; if he, that *ſtilleth the noiſe of the ſeas*, did not alſo *repreſs the tumults of the peo-*

Pſ. xxxvii. 17. x. 15. Job xii. 21. xxxviii. 15. Pſ. cvii. 40. lxxv. 7.

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ple. Indeed, as in nature it is wiſely provided that tig wolves, and foxes upon the earth, that kites in the and ſharks in the ſea, ſhall not ſo multiply and abou but that many tame and gentle creatures ſhall abide th by them; ſo among men, that (among divers fier ravenous, crafty, and miſchievous men) ſo many po ſimple, and harmleſs people do make a ſhift to l here in competent ſafety, liberty, eaſe, and comfort, d argue his eſpecial overwatching care and governan who (as we are, in conformity to experience, taught ſacred Scripture) hath an eſpecial regard unto the p and unto the meek; providing for them, and protecti them.

Pſal. cxlvi. 7. cvii. 41. ix. 9. x. 14. xxxvii. 16.

I might ſubjoin thoſe ſignifications of Providence, whi the general connection of mankind doth afford; thin being ſo ordered, that ſeveral nations and ſocieties ſh be prompted, by need or by advantage mutual, to maint correſpondence and commerce with each other; un common laws and compacts, that ſo there ſhould beco a kind of union and harmony even among the ſeve

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Grant, we beſeech thee, Almighty God, that the words, which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be ſo grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praiſe of thy name, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

I Believe in God,

SERMON VIII.

THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM UNIVERSAL CONSENT.

PSALM xix. 3, 4.

There is no ſpeech nor language where their voice is not

tions, through all courſes of time, *who* (otherwiſe differ- SERM.
g in language, cuſtom, and conceit) *only have agreed in* VIII.
is one matter of opinion. This teſtimony, in itſelf ſimply
ken, hath indeed (according to the rules of reaſon and
dgments of wiſe men) no ſmall force; but ſeems to
ave much greater, if we conſider the ſource, whatever
hat could be, whence it was derived. As to the thing
bſolutely taken, Ariſtotle thus ranks the degrees of pro-
ability: what ſeems true to ſome wiſe men is ſomewhat
robable; what ſeems to the moſt or to all wiſe men, is
ery probable; what moſt men, both wiſe and unwiſe, aſ-
ent unto, doth ſtill more reſemble truth; but what men
enerally conſent in hath the higheſt probability, and ap-
proaches near to demonſtrable truth; ſo near, that it may
pas for ridiculous arrogance and ſelf-conceitedneſs, or for
tolerable obſtinacy and perverſeneſs, to deny it. *A man,*
aith the philoſopher, *may aſſume what ſeems true to the*
wiſe, if it do not contradict the common opinion of men; no
man's wiſdom (he ſuppoſes) ſufficient to balance the ge-
eral authority of men. Indeed, when extravagant wits,
nd pretenders to wiſdom, (or to an extraordinary reach in
nowledge,) ſhall aſſert things evidently repugnant to ſenſe
r reaſon; that ſnow and coal have the like appearance,
s did Anaxagoras;) that all motion is impoſſible, (as
Zeno;) that contradictory propoſitions may be conſiſtent,
as Heraclitus;) we may add to thoſe inſtances, that all
hings in nature proceeded from chance, (as Epicurus and
is followers;) what other means have we (ſince no princi-
ples can be more evident than ſuch propoſitions as they
eject) to confute them, or to decide the cauſe, than
making appeal to the common ſentiments of mankind?
which if they decline, what have we more to do than to
augh at or pity them? however, ſurely, he needs to have
a very ſtrong and very clear reaſon to ſhew, who dares to
withſtand the common ſuffrage of mankind, and to chal-
enge all the world of miſtake. Now ſomewhat to en-
orce this diſcourſe; but more to evidence the matter of
act upon which it is grounded, and withal to make good
hat confirmation thereof, which was intimated; I ſhall

Θεὶν δ' ἂν τις τὸ δοκοῦν τοῖς σοφοῖς, ἐὰν μὴ ἐναντίον τοῖς τῶν πολλῶν δόξαις ᾖ. Top. 1. 8.

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allege ſome few teſtimonies of ancient philoſophers, (that is, of witneſſes in this cauſe moſt impartial and unſuſpected,) ſelected out of innumerable others extant and obvious, ſerving to the ſame purpoſe: *We are wont to attribute much*, ſaith Seneca, *to what all men preſume; it is an argument with us of truth, that any thing ſeems true to all; as that there be Gods we hence collect, for that all men have engrafted in them an opinion concerning Gods; neither is there any nation ſo void of laws, or good manners, that it doth not believe there are ſome Gods* [a]; ſo doth he aſſert the matter of fact, and argue from it. The like doth Cicero in many places, ſometimes in the perſon of his dialogiſts, ſometimes according to his own ſenſe; preſſing this argument as very weighty. *This*, ſaith he, in his Tuſculan Queſtions, *ſeems a moſt firm thing, which is alleged, why we ſhould believe Gods to be, becauſe no nation is ſo fierce, no man ſo wild, whoſe mind an opinion concerning Gods hath not imbued: many think amiſs concerning Gods, for that uſes to proceed from bad cuſtom, but all do however conceive a Divine power and nature to exiſt—Now in all things the conſent of all nations is to be ſuppoſed a law of nature* [b]. We ſhall have other occaſion to cite divers places out of Plato and Ariſtotle, confirming the ſame thing; I ſhall now only add theſe pregnant words of Maximus Tyrius: *In ſuch a quarrelling, and tumult, and jangling*, (about other matters of opinion,) *you may ſee this one by common accord acknowledged law and ſpeech, that there is one God, the King and Father of all; and many gods, the children of God, and ruling together with*

[a] Multum dare ſolemus præſumptioni omnium hominum, apud nos veritatis argumentum eſt aliquid omnibus videri; tanquam Deos eſſe ſic colligimus, quod omnibus de Diis opinio inſita eſt; nec ulla gens uſquam eſt adeo extra leges moreſque projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat. *Sen. Epiſt.* cxvii. *vid. de Benef.* iv. 4.

[b] Firmiſſimum hoc afferri videtur cur Deos eſſe credamus, quod nulla gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam ſit immanis, cujus mentem non imbuerit Deorum opinio. Multi de Diis prava ſentiunt, (id enim vitioſo more efficiſolet;) omnes tamen eſſe vim, et naturam divinam arbitrantur.—Omni autem in re conſenſio omnium gentium lex naturæ putanda eſt. *Tuſc.* i. p. 299.

Vid. de Nat. Deor. i. pag. 22. et ii. pag. 53, 57, &c.

n: this the Greek says, and this the Barbarian says; the habiter of the continent, and the islander; the wise and e unwise do say the same [c].

Thus it appears, by testimony abundantly sufficient, (to hich also all histories ancient and modern do agree,) that ur conclusion hath been the catholic and current doctrine f all times and of all places; so that who denies assent hereto, is beyond measure paradoxical, and belongs to a ect very thin and weak; is in opinion *what a monster is a nature*, a thing extraordinary and uncouth; *as a lion without courage, an ox without horns, a bird without wings*, as the philosopher speaks;) a thing which seldom haps o be, and that never without some great error or defect [d].

But if, as surely he will, our haughty adversary shall refuse the verdict of this grand jury, we may assert its authority, not only as competent in itself, but as more considerable in respect to the causes whence it proceeded, or from the manner by which this general consent can be conceived to have been produced and propagated among men. That men should thus conspire in opinion must needs proceed either, 1. from hence, that such an opinion was by way of natural light or instinct (as the first most evident principles of science are conceived to be, or as the most effectual propensions toward good are) implanted in man's nature; thus Cicero and other philosophers suppose it to have come: in him it is thus said, and argued: *Since not by any institution, or custom, or law, this opinion is established, and among all, without exception, a firm consent doth abide, it is necessary there should be Gods; we having implanted, or rather inbred notions concerning*

[c] Ἐν τοιούτῳ δὴ πολίμῳ καὶ τάραι καὶ διαφορᾷ ἅπαν τὸν τῶν γῆ ἐμέφανον ἔρον καὶ λόγον, ὅτι θεὸς ἐς τάραιον βασιλεὺς καὶ πατὴρ καὶ θεοὶ πολλοὶ, θεῶν πατὴρ, ἐπάρχοντες θεῶν, τοῦτο δὴ ὁ Ἕλλην λέγει, καὶ ὁ βάρβαρος λέγει, καὶ ὁ ἠπειρώτης, καὶ ὁ νησιώτης, καὶ ὁ σοφὸς, καὶ ὁ ἄσοφος. *Diff.* i. p. 5.

[d] Εἰ δὲ ἐγγένοιτο ἐν τῇ ἐφέρειν αἰῶνι μόνον τι καὶ τρίτῳ ἄθεον καὶ πανταχὸ καὶ ἀπαὶ γένος. οὐ ἄθεμις λέων, οὐ βοῦς ἄκερως, οὐ ἔρνις ἄπτερος. *Id.* 16.

Καὶ τοι ἐκ δὲ ἐπιφέρει τὸν τῶν βαρβάρων σοφὸν, εἶναι μόνοις πάντων τὸν ἀθέατον ἔχειν, μόνοι ἀμφιβάλλειν περὶ θεῶν, ἅμα γε εἰσὶν, ἢ ἐκ εἰσὶν, καὶ ἅμα γε ἡμῶν φροντίζουσι, ἢ ἐ, &c. *Ælian. Var.* ii. 31.

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them; but about whatever men naturally do agree, th must needs be true: we must therefore confess there a Gods [c]. Thus doth he draw this opinion from origin light of nature. Or, 2. it may come from a common i clination in man's soul naturally disposing every man entertain this opinion, whenever it is propounded, as the is in our eyes a natural readiness to perceive the ligh whenever it shines before us; thus others explain the ri thereof, as Julian particularly: *We all*, saith he, *with being taught*, (without any painful or long instruction,) a *persuaded, that a Divinity exists; and to regard it, and have, we may suppose, a speedy tendency* (or recourse *thereto; being in such manner disposed thereto in our soul as things endued with the faculty of seeing are to the light* the same similitude is, as I remember, used by Plato i the same purpose. Or, 3. it may come hence, that for very prevalent reason (obvious to all men, even to th most rude and barbarous, and flowing from common pri ciples or notions of truth) did beget this agreement them: thus Plutarch derives it from men's common o

Plut. de

other way beſide one of theſe can we (following
ence or reaſon) imagine, by which any opinion or
ce ſhould prevail generally among men, who other-
are ſo apt to differ and diſſent in judgment about
. And be it any one or more of theſe ways that
pinion became ſo univerſally inſtilled into men's
, our argument will thereby gain weight and force:
aſſign or acknowledge any of the two firſt ways, we
effect yield the queſtion; and grant it unreaſonable
y our concluſion: if nature forcibly drives men, or
ly draws men into this perſuaſion, (nature, which al-
we find in her notions and in her inſtincts very ſin-
and faithful, not only to ourſelves, but to all other
ures,) how vain an extravagancy will it then be to
e it? alſo, if we grant that plain reaſon, apparent to
enerality of men, hath moved them to conſent here-
we not therefore, by diſſenting from it, renounce
ion ſenſe, and confeſs ourſelves unreaſonable? but if
y; that it did ariſe in the laſt manner, from a com-
inſtruction or primitive tradition, (as indeed, to my
ng, from that chiefly, aſſiſted by good reaſon, it moſt
bly did ariſe,) we ſhall thereby be driven to inquire,
that common maſter, or the author of ſuch tradition
of any ſuch we find no name recorded, (as we do of
, who have by plauſible reaſons or artifices drawn

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thereof were none other, than the first parents of mankind itself, who, as they could not be ignorant of their own original, so could not but take care by ordinary education to convey the knowledge thereof to their children; whence it must needs insensibly spread itself over all posterities of men, being sucked in with their milk, being taught them together with their first rudiments of speech? Thus doth that consideration lead us to another, very advantageous to our purpose; that mankind hath proceeded from one common stock of one man or a few men gathered together; which doth upon a double score confirm our assertion: first, as proving the generations of men had a beginning; secondly, as affording us their most weighty authority for the doctrine we assert. For, 1. supposing mankind had a beginning upon this earth, whence could it proceed but from such a Being as we assert? who but such an one (so wise, powerful and good) could or would form these bodies of ours so full of wonderful artifice? who should infuse those divine endowments (not only of life and sense, but) of understanding and reason? Aristotle, discoursing about the generation of animals, says, *If man* (or any other perfect animal) *were γηγενὴς, he must be necessarily produced, either as out of a worm, or as from an egg;* but is it not ridiculous to suppose him to arise in either of those manners? did we, did ever any one in any age observe any such production of a man? yet, why if once it could be, should it not happen sometime, yea often again, in some part of the earth, in so many thousand years? what peculiar lucky temper of slime can we imagine to have been then, which not at sometime afterward, not somewhere should appear again? Experience sufficiently declares, that more is required to so noble a production, that men no otherwise come into the world, than either from another man, (fitted in a manner curious above our conception with many organs most exquisitely suited to that purpose,) or immediately from a cause incomprehensibly great and wise. And could we without fondness conceive man's body possibly might arise (like mice, as Diodorus Siculus tells us, out of the mud of Nilus) from

De Gener. Anim. iii. cap. ult. Stoici putant homines in omnibus terris et agris generatos tanquam fungos. *Lact.* vii. 4. Vid. Lipsi. Phys. Stoic. iii. 3.

earth and water fermented together, and organized by the sun's heat; yet (as more largely we have discoursed at another time) we cannot however well suppose his soul, that principle of operations so excellent, (so much different from, so far elevated above all material motions,) to spring up from dirty stuff, however baked or boiled by heat. I ask also, (supposing still this notion derived from the first men,) 2. who instilled even this notion into them? why they should conceive themselves to come from God, if they did not find it so; if he that made them, did not sensibly discover himself to them, and shew them, that to him they owed their being? In short, if they did testify and teach their posterity, that they came from God, we can have no reason to disbelieve them; nor can imagine more credible witnesses, or more reasonable instructors than themselves concerning their own original: it is a discourse, this, which we find even in Plato: *We must,* saith he, *yield credence to them, who first avouched themselves the offspring of God, and did sure clearly know their own progenitors; it is indeed impossible to distrust the children of the Gods, although otherwise speaking without plausible or necessary demonstrations; but, following law, we must believe them, as testifying about matters peculiarly belonging to themselves* [h].

Thus do these two notions, that of general tradition concerning God, and that concerning man's origin upon earth from one stock, mutually support and defend each other [i]. And indeed, concerning the latter, there be divers other arguments of the same kind, although perhaps hardly any so clear and valid, confirming it; I mean divers common opinions, stories, and practices, of an unaccountable rise, which cannot be well deemed to have been introduced, and so universally diffused among men, otherwise

[h] Πιστέον τοῖς εἰρημένοις ἔμπροσθεν, ἐκγόνοις μὲν θεῶν οὖσιν, ὡς ἔφασαν, σαφῶς δέ που τοὺς αὐτῶν προγόνους εἰδόσιν· ἀδύνατον οὖν θεῶν παισὶν ἀπιστεῖν, καίπερ ἄνευ τε εἰκότων καὶ ἀναγκαίων ἀποδείξεων λέγουσιν, ἀλλ' ὡς οἰκεῖα φάσκουσιν ἀπαγγέλλειν, ἐπόμενοι τῷ νόμῳ πιστευτέον. *Tim.* p. 1053.

[i] ——quæ si singula vos forte non movent, universa certe inter se connexa, atque conjuncta movere debebunt. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii.

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than from this fountain. I think it worth the while to propound ſome inſtances thereof, of each kind.

Vid. Clem. Alex. Str. v. p. 401.

Even this opinion, or ſtory itſelf, concerning mankind proceeding from one ſingle or very narrow ſtock, was commonly received, and that from this head of tradition; as alſo divers other concerning the nature and ſtate of man. That God did form man and breathe his ſoul into him, (as Aratus ſays, that *we are God's offspring*, and, as Cicero ſpeaks, that *we have our ſouls drawn and dropped from the Divine nature*,) might be ſhewn by innumerable teſtimonies to have been a general opinion; which although it have a very ſtrong foundation in reaſon, yet it ſeems rather to have obtained by virtue of tradition.

A natura divina hauſtos animos et delibutos habemus. *Cic. Divin.* 1.

[k] That man was formed after the image of God, and doth much reſemble him, was alſo a general opinion, as Ariſtotle himſelf obſerves; and Ovid moſt expreſsly, according to what he found ſet down in ancient ſtories.

Finxit ad effigiem.

That man's ſoul is immortal, and deſtined to a future ſtate of life, in joy or pain reſpectively, according to his merits or demerits in this life; that there ſhould accordingly paſs ſevere ſcrutinies and judgments after death upon the actions of this life; that there were places provided of reſt and pleaſure for good men, of horror and miſery for bad men departed; were opinions that did commonly poſſeſs men's minds; none of them, it ſeems, upon the force of any arguments having a common influence upon men's minds, (ſuch as philoſophers did by ſpeculation invent, being indeed too ſubtile for vulgar capacities to apprehend, and ſcarce able to perſuade themſelves,) but rather from their education, continued through all times, and commencing from that head we ſpeak of; as even ſuch philoſophers themſelves confeſs: *We muſt*, ſays Plato, *believe the reports of this kind*, (ſpeaking about theſe matters,) *being ſo many, and ſo very ancient* [l]: and,

Clem. Str. v. p. 442.

[k] Ἀνθρωποειδεῖς θεοὺς, &c. *Metaph.* xii. 8.

Ὥσπερ δὲ πάντες καὶ τὰ εἴδη ἑαυτοῖς ἀφεμοιοῦσι, οὕτω καὶ τοὺς βίους τῶν θεῶν. *Polit.* i. 1.

[l] Πιστεύειν δὲ ταῖς ἄλλαις φήμαις χρεὼν περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα, οὕτω πολλαῖς καὶ σφόδρα παλαιαῖς οὔσαις. *Plat. de Leg.* 2. *Vid. Gorg. ſub fin.*

We suppose, saith Cicero, *that souls abide after death from the consent of all nations* [m]. And, *I cannot*, saith he again, *assent unto those, who have lately begun to discourse, that souls do perish together with bodies, and that all things are blotted out by death: the authority of the ancients doth more prevail with me* [n]. And, *When*, saith Seneca, *we dispute concerning the eternity of souls, the consent of men either fearing or worshipping the Inferi* (that is, the state of things after death) *hath no slight moment with us* [o]. Even Celsus himself (an Epicurean philosopher, and great enemy of our faith) confesses, that *divine men had delivered it, that happy souls should enjoy a happy life hereafter* [p].

The opinion concerning man having sometimes been in a better state, (both in regard to complexion of mind, and outward accommodations of life,) but that he did by his wilful miscarriages fall thence into this wretched condition of proneness to sin, and subjection to sorrow, was an ancient doctrine, (if we take Plato's word;) and concerning it Cicero hath these remarkable words: *From which errors and miseries of human life we may*, saith he, *conclude, that sometime those ancient prophets, or interpreters of the Divine mind in the delivery of holy mysteries, who have said, that we are born to undergo punishments for the faults committed in a former life, may seem to have understood somewhat* [q].—(It is true, these authors assign this fall to the souls of singular persons in a state of preexistence; but it is plain enough, how easy it might be so to mistake and transform the story.) To the same head may be

Παλαιὸς τις λόγος. *Phæd.*

[m] Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium. *Cic. Tusc.* 1.

[n] Neque enim assentior iis, qui hæc nuper differere coeperunt cum corporibus simul animas interire, atque omnia morte deleri; plus apud me antiquitas valet, &c. *Cic. Leg.*

[o] Cum de animarum æternitate differimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timentium inferos, aut colentium. *Sen. Ep.* 117.

[p] Ἀείφυτον θεῖον δοξάσαν εὐδαίμων βίον ψυχαῖς εὐδαίμοσι. *Celsus apud Orig.* pag. 250.

[q] Ex quibus humanæ vitæ erroribus atque ærumnis fit, ut interdum veteres illi vates, sive in sacris initiisque tradendis divinæ mentis interpretes, qui non ob scelera suscepta in vita superiore pœnarum luendarum causa natos esse dixerunt, aliquid vidisse videantur, &c. *Cic. Fragm.* pag. 79.

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referred that current ſtory concerning the golden age, in which men firſt did live ſo happily without care and pain; which ſo livelily expreſſes man's condition in Paradiſe: As alſo thereto may belong that relation concerning man's being thrown into this miſerable ſtate, becauſe of a rapine committed againſt God's will, and that by the means of a woman ſent down; who *with her hands opened the lid of a great veſſel*, (fraught with miſchiefs,) *and thence diſperſed ſad diſaſters and ſorrows among men;* as Heſiod expreſſeth it, in words very applicable to the fact of our mother Eve, and the event following it [q].

In Phædr.

I do not know alſo whether what Plato ſays concerning man's being at firſt ἀνδρόγυνος, (of both ſexes,) and being afterward cleaved into two, was borrowed from tradition, or deviſed from his own fancy; it ſurely well comports with the ſacred hiſtory concerning woman being taken out of man. That there are two prime cauſes, or principles, one of good things, the other of bad, was the ancient doctrine among all the ancient nations; of the Perſians, (who called one of them Oromaſdes, the other Arimanius;) of the Egyptians, (who had their Oſiris and Typhon;) of the Chaldeans, (who had their good and bad planets;) of the Greeks, (who had their good and bad dæmon, their Ζεὺς and Ἅδης;) we have reported by Plutarch in his tract *De Iſide et Oſiride*, by Laertius in his Proœme, and others, (*Aug. de Civ. Dei*, v. 21.) which conceits ſeem derived from the ancient traditions concerning *God* the author of all good, and *Sathan* the tempter to all evil, and the miniſter of Divine vengeance; (Plutarch expreſsly ſays the good principle was called *God*, the bad one, *Dæmon*.) Indeed there were many other relations concerning matters of fact, or pieces of ancient ſtory, agreeing with the ſacred writings, which did among the ancient people paſs commonly, although ſomewhat diſguiſed by alterations incident from time and other cauſes; which

q Primi mortalium, quique ex his geniti naturam incorrupti ſequebantur, &c. *Sen. Ep.* 90.

——χείρεσσι πίθου μέγα πῶμ' ἀφελοῦσα
Ἐσκέδασ', ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἐμήσατο κήδεα λυγρά. *Heſ.* Ἔργ.

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ı beſt derivable from this common fountain: ſuch as concerning the ſons of God and heroes dwelling on earth; concerning men of old time exceeding thoſe of wing times in length of life, in ſtature, in ſtrength of y, whereof in ancient poets there is ſo much men-; concerning men's conſpiring in rebellion againſt l, affecting and attempting to climb heaven; concern-mankind being overwhelmed and deſtroyed by an uni-al deluge, and that by Divine juſtice, becauſe of cru-and oppreſſion (with other enormous vices) generally ning:

—Qua terra patet, fera regnat Erinnys,
In facinus juraſſe putes: dent ocyus omnes
Quas meruere pati (ſic ſtat ſententia) pœnas.

over the earth, fierce rage doth reign; you would ı them to have ſworn to do miſchief; let them all im-liately undergo the pains which they have deſerved; this ıy reſolution: ſo God, in Ovid's ſtyle, declared the rea-why he decreed to bring that ſore calamity upon ıkind: I might add that prophecy, commonly known, t this world ſhall finally periſh by a general confla-tion. Clem. Str. v. p. 442.

'heſe opinions and ſtories chiefly concern man; there e divers others concerning God and religion, ſprouting bably from the ſame root. That Divine goodneſs was pure motive of God's making the world, ſeems to e been a tradition; implied by their ſaying, that *Love : the firſt, and the chief of the Gods:* πρώτιςον μὲν ἔρωτα ı μηδίσατο πάντων, ſaid Parmenides; and, 'Ηδ' Ἔρος, ὃς πάν-ıs μεταπρέπει ἀθανάτοισι, ſaid Heſiod. That God made world out of a chaos, or confuſed heap of matter; ich is ſo plainly expreſſed in Heſiod, in Ovid, and in ıer ancient writers. That God did make or beget infe-r inſenſible powers, (of great underſtanding and ability; ıom they called Gods, and the children of the ſovereign ıd;) whom God immediately did converſe with, and in yal manner did govern; whom he did employ as ſpies d agents in providential adminiſtrations of human af-irs; who did frequently appear unto, and familiarly

Arist. Metaph. i. 4.

Arist. Pol. i. 1.

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converſe with men; who do walk up and down the earth obſerving men's actions; ſecretly aſſiſting and comforting good men, reſtraining and croſſing and puniſhing the bad; whereof we have ſo many inſtances in Homer, in Heſiod, and in other ancient writers; ſhewing as to thoſe matters the general conceits of the old world. That God's eſpecial preſence and reſidence was above, in heaven, Ariſtotle expreſsly tells us was the belief of all men: *All men*, ſaith he, *have an opinion concerning Gods and all men aſſign the higheſt place to the Gods, both Greeks and Barbarians* [r].

That God doth know all the actions, words, and inward thoughts of men. *Vid. Cl. Str.* 5.

That God's providence did extend itſelf to all particularities of affairs; and that all things were ordered by him; he conſtantly exerciſing both benignity and juſtice ſuitably to the deſerts and needs of men; encouraging and aſſiſting; bleſſing and rewarding virtuous and pious men; relieving the diſtreſſed and helpleſs; controlling and chaſtiſing ſuch as were outrageouſly unjuſt or impious. That God at ſeaſons uſed to declare his mind to men (his approbation or diſpleaſure in regard to their doings) by accidents preternatural or prodigious; did preſignify future events; did impart foreknowledge of them in ſeveral ways; by dreams, by viſions, by inſpirations, &c. To theſe opinions were anſwerable divers common practices, invocating Divine help in need; conſulting God by oracle in caſe of ignorance or doubt; deprecating Divine vengeance; making acknowledgments to God in hymns and praiſes; returning oblations for benefits received, both common and ſpecial; expiating guilt, and appeaſing God's wrath by purgations and by ſacrifices, (a practice peculiarly unlikely to proceed from any other reaſon than inſtitution;) fortifying teſtimonies and promiſes by oath or appeal to Divine knowledge and juſtice; invoking (upon condition) God's judgments upon themſelves or others, what is called curſing; appointing prieſts for God's ſervice, and yielding them extraordinary reſpect; conſecrating temples and altars; making vows, and dedicating

That there will be a future judgment, and rewards ſuited to the practices of men in this life. *Vid. Cl. Strom. v. p.* 442.

[r] Πάντες γὰρ ἄνθρωποι περὶ θεῶν ἔχουσιν ὑπόληψιν, καὶ πάντες τὸν ἀνωτάτω τόπον ἀποδιδόασι τοῖς βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες. *De Cœlo*, i. 3.

gifts; celebrating festivals; paying tithes (that very determinate part) of the fruits of the earth, of the spoils in war, of the gains in trade, by way of acknowledgment and thankfulness to the Donor and Disposer of all things: in which, and the like opinions and performances, (which it would be a long business particularly to insist on,) men's general concurrence doth fairly argue, that their religion did peculiarly result from one simple institution common to mankind.

To these we might adjoin divers civil customs, wherein most nations did, from this cause probably, conspire: for instance, their counting by decades, or stopping at ten in their numerical computations; which Aristotle says, all men, both Barbarians and Greeks, did use, noting, that so common an agreement could not arise from chance, but from nature[s]; but it is much more plausible to assign its rise to tradition. Their having every where anciently the same number of letters, and the same names (or little varied) of them. Their dividing time into weeks, (or systems of seven days;) of which practice to have been general, there be many plain testimonies. Their beginning the νυχθήμερον (or account of the daily revolution of the heavens) from the night, grounded probably upon the report that night did precede day; as Hesiod phraseth it, that *night did beget day*[t]. Their general abhorrence of incestuous copulations; of which there is indeed some ground in nature, but none, I suppose, so very clear or discernible, as might serve alone to produce such a consent; yea, perhaps, if one consider it, the whole business concerning matrimony will seem drawn from the head we discourse of. Their great care of funerals, and decently interring the dead; which Cicero indeed deduces as a consequence upon their belief of the soul's immortality. In Læl.

[s] Πάντες ἄνθρωποι καὶ βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες ὡς τὰ δέκα καταριθμοῦσι—ὃ γὰρ δι' ἀπὸ τύχης γε αὐτὸ ποιοῦντες φαίνονται, καὶ ἀεί· τὸ δὲ ἀεὶ καὶ ἰσὶ πάντων ἕνα ἀπὸ τύχης, ἀλλὰ φυσικόν. *Arist. Probl.* xv. 3.

[t] Νυκτὸς δ' αὖτ' αἴθής τε καὶ ἠμίεν ἐξεγένοντο. *Hesiod. Theog.*

—dies natales, et mensium, et annorum initia sic observant, ut noctem dies subsequatur. *Cæs. de Gal.* l. 6.

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In fine, the consent of the old world in all moral notions of moment doth (to my sense) much imply the same thing; which notions although natural reason well used might suggest to all men, yet men, it seems, were never so generally disposed to reason well, as thereby alone to discern and approve unanimously the same truths; especially truths of this nature; which many men are apt to dislike, (as repugnant to their desires,) and consequently not ready to believe; which yet might easily by education be infused into their minds, and, by virtue of the prejudice thereby begot, (assisted by plausible reason and popular consent,) be preserved and rooted in them.

Now these (with divers more, perhaps, which they who are curiously inquisitive might observe) common persuasions (whether concerning matters of universal truth, or of particular facts) and those common usages having little or nothing of foundation apparent in man's nature, or in the clear reason of the thing, no prevailing appetite or inclination of man's soul prompting to them, no occasion commonly incident to human affairs being apt to suggest them, (at least divers of them; there being indeed rather an aptitude in men to disapprove and resist them, as cross to their dispositions,) we cannot reasonably deduce them from any other cause than such as we have assigned, men's being, as St. Paul speaks, *made of one blood*, and receiving, as their nature, so their principles of opinion and practice from the same common parents.

To confirm which discourse, and to prevent farther objections against it, we may consider, that however perhaps among some very barbarous nations this principal tradition (together with others mentioned, attending thereon) may have been almost worn out by time and men's stupid negligence; that however also among some people, affecting semblances of singular wisdom, as among the Greeks, the matter thereof might fall under question and some might doubt thereof, others contradict and deny it; yet most ancient histories (particularly that of Moses far most ancient of all, and therefore, even secluding its special and more sacred authority, of all most credible) do

atteſt them to have been, in ſubſtance, univerſally received, running with a ſtrong and clear current among the eaſtern people, (the Chaldeans, Phœnicians, and Egyptians;) who that they were the moſt ancient inhabiters of the earth, from whom the reſt of mankind was propagated, the antiquity of empires among them, the firſt uſe of letters, the riſe of arts, the greater progreſs in all kinds of civil culture, (which things argue a longer continuance in one place and ſtate,) beſide expreſs records of ſtory and viſible monuments of things performed among them, do ſufficiently declare; whoſe conſent therefore doth in reaſon, ſo far as ſerves our purpoſe, involve the conſent of all mankind; and doth confirm thoſe notions to have flowed from the clear ſpring of our firſt parents their inſtruction.

It is alſo true, I muſt confeſs, that theſe original traditions, (concerning the being and providence of God,) as muſt neceſſarily happen not only by the malice of evil ſpirits, but from man's natural infirmity and proneneſs to change, even to the worſe, (as alſo from men's aptneſs to miſtake, from rude ignorance, from wantonneſs of fancy, from craftineſs in promoting deſigns of ambition and covetouſneſs by introducing novelties, and from ſuch like cauſes,) did ſoon begin to be adulterated by many corrupt mixtures, did by degrees degenerate exceedingly into various ſhapes of ſuperſtition, falſehood, and futility. Yet even ſo was Judaiſm depraved by the Scribes; and Chriſtianity itſelf hath been ſtrangely debaſed by a long courſe of ignorant and bad times; yet who can doubt but both theſe were derived from one pure inſtruction; that of Moſes, this of Chriſt our Lord? That it might ſo fare with the primitive traditions of religion is evident; that it really did ſo, we have even the judgment and aſſertion of Ariſtotle himſelf, in thoſe remarkable words of his to this purpoſe: *There were*, ſaith he, *things conveyed traditionally by the primitive and ancient men, and left in a fabulous dreſs to their poſterity; that there are theſe Gods, and that Divinity maintains* (or encompaſſes) *all nature: but other things were to theſe fictitiouſly ſuperinduced for per-*

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suasion of the vulgar sort, and for the use of laws and public commodity: hence they speak of the Gods, as having a human shape, or resembling other living creatures, and other things consequent upon, or agreeable to, these sayings; from which things if we separate that only which was first delivered, that they deemed the Gods the first beings, we may suppose what they said divinely spoken. And it is according to probability, all art and philosophy being, as might possibly, often invented and lost again, that even these opinions of them have as relics been preserved until now: the opinion then of our fathers, and that which came from the first men, is only thus far manifest to us[u].

Thus did the philosopher, with a sagacity worthy so great a man, discern, that through that coarser ore, consisting in great part of dross and feculency, (taken from the fondness or fraud of human invention, or from diabolical suggestion,) a pure vein of truth did run, drawn from the source of primitive tradition; from which being supposed we do infer, what he acknowledges divinely said, that there doth exist one first being or substance, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfection. The like observations and judgments might be produced out of divers other wise men, (Plato, Cicero, and the like,) who acknowledge and urge this common tradition as a good argument of the truths we maintain, as to the substance of them; yet scruple not to dissent from and to reprehend the vulgar errors and bad customs which had crept in and became annexed to them. But let thus much suffice for this whole argument; being the last of those I intend to use

[u] Παραδίδοται δὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων καὶ παλαιῶν, ἐν μύθου σχήματι καταλελειμμένα τοῖς ὕστερον, ὅτι θεοί τί ἐισιν οὗτοι, καὶ περιέχει τὸ θεῖον τὴν ὅλην φύσιν. τὰ δὶ λοιπὰ μυθικῶς ἤδη προσήχθαι πρὸς τὴν πειθὼ τῶν πολλῶν, καὶ πρὸς τὴν εἰς τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὶ συμφέρον χρῆσιν. ἀνθρωποειδεῖς τι γὰρ τούτους, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζώων ὁμοίους τισὶ λέγουσι, καὶ τούτοις ἕτερα ἀκόλουθα, καὶ παραπλήσια τοῖς εἰρημένοις· ὧν εἴ τις χωρίσας αὐτὸ λάβοι μόνον τὸ πρῶτον, ὅτι θεοὺς ᾤοντο τὰς πρώτας οὐσίας εἶναι, θείως ἂν εἰρῆσθαι νομίσαι. καὶ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς πολλάκις εὑρημένης εἰς τὸ δυνατὸν ἑκάστης καὶ τέχνης, καὶ φιλοσοφίας, καὶ πάλιν φθειρομένων· καὶ ταύτας τὰς δόξας ἐκείνων, οἷον λείψανα περισεσῶσθαι μέχρι τοῦ νῦν· ἡ μὲν οὖν πάτριος δόξα, καὶ ἡ παρὰ τῶν πρώτων ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἡμῖν φανερὰ μόνον *Arist. Metaphys.* xii. 8.

for the proof of that fundamental point, which is the root of all religion and piety.

I have produced several arguments to that purpose, (or rather several kinds of argument, each containing many subordinate ones,) most proper, I conceive, and apt to have a general efficacy upon men's minds, in begetting and confirming a belief thereof. Each of them have indeed, to my seeming, even singly taken, a force irresistible; and the greatest in its kind, that any such conclusion, not immediately apparent to sense, is capable of. The existence of any one cause in natural philosophy, is not there demonstrable by effects in any proportion so many or various, so conspicuous or certain. No question can be determined by an authority so ample and comprehensive, so express and peremptory. No doctrine can to its confirmation allege so general, so constant, so uniform a tradition. No matter of fact can be assured by testimonies so many in number, so various in kind, so weighty in quality, as those, upon which this conclusion doth stand. And if we join together all these, in themselves so considerable and powerful forces, how can we be able to resist them? how can we dare to doubt of that, which they conspire to infer? When, I say, to the universal harmony of nature the common voice of nations doth yield its consent; when with the ordinary course of things, so many extraordinary accidents do concur in vote: when that which so many reasons prove, continual tradition also teaches; what can the result be, but firm persuasion in every wise and honest heart of the proposition so confirmed? except we can suppose, that, by a fatal conspiracy, all the appearances in nature, and all the generations of men; the highest reason, and the greatest authority imaginable, have combined to deceive us.

In the precedent discourses I have endeavoured to prove the existence of God, by arguments, which do indeed more immediately evince those three principal attributes, wisdom, power, and goodness incomprehensible, but which also consequentially declare all other the attributes commonly esteemed ingredients of that notion, which answers

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to the name of God; (abſolutely put, and without any adjunct limiting and diminiſhing it;) all thoſe attributes, which Ariſtotle's definition, *The eternal moſt excellent living thing*[x]; or that of Tertullian, *The ſupreme great thing*[y]; do include or imply; namely, his *unity* firſt; then his *eternity* and indefectibility; his immenſe *omnipreſence*, his *ſpirituality*; his *juſtice* and *veracity*; his *Sovereign Majeſty* and authority; with the like connected to thoſe, (for I cannot proſecute all the Divine perfections, according to that multiplicity of diſtinction, which our manner of conceit and expreſſion is wont to aſſign.)

The uniformity, concord, and perfect harmony which appears in the conſtitution and conſervation of things; their conſpiring to one end, their continuing in the ſame order and courſe, do plainly declare the unity of God; even as the laſting peace of a commonwealth (compoſed of perſons different in affections and humour) argues one law, that regulates and contains them; as the orderly march of an army ſhews it managed by one conduct; as the uniformity of a houſe, or of a town, declares it contrived by one architect.

And hereto alſo the common ſuffrage of mankind doth in a manner agree: for, however that they worſhipped a multitude of inferior deities, yet that there was one Supreme God, Author and Governor of the reſt, and of all things beſide, tranſcending in power and wiſdom, and all kind of perfection, was evidently the common opinion; whom therefore we ſee the Poets (the beſt interpreters of the popular opinions) do ſtyle the *Father of gods and men*; *the King of the gods*; *the moſt high, moſt great, moſt excellent, &c.* *The greater popularity*, as Tertullian ſpeaks, *of mankind, even when idolatry obſcured the ſenſe of Divine providence, did however appropriate the name of*

Ὕψιστος, μέγιστος, κράτιστος.

x Φαμὲν δὲ τὸν θεὸν εἶναι ζῶον ἀΐδιον ἄριστον. *Ariſt. Metaph.* xii. 7.

y Summum magnum, et forma, et ratione, et vi, et poteſtate. *Tert. adv. Marc.* i. 3.

Ἡ μακαρία φύσις· ἡ ἄφθονος ἀγαθότης· τὸ ἀγαπητὸν πᾶσι τοῖς λόγῳ μετειληφόσι· τὸ πολυπόθητον κάλλος· ἡ ἀρχὴ τῶν ὄντων· ἡ πηγὴ τῆς ζωῆς· τὸ νοερὸν φῶς· ἡ ἀπέρατος σοφία. *Baſ. Hexaem.* λογ. α.

pecially to one, in their usual expressions; being say, If God grant; and, What pleases God; and, I d it to God[z]. And if the vulgar had in some mea- is conceit, the wiser sort appear to have had more nd full apprehensions and persuasions concerning it: efers the making of the world to one whom he πατέρα καὶ ποιητὴν (*the Father and Maker of the uni-* Aristotle, when he hath occasion to speak of God, sually speak in the singular; so do other philoso- as the Stoics, in their famous precept *Deum sequi, low God*, that is, to acquiesce in, or submit to, Di- ovidence,) sometime they do expressly signify this to ir opinion: *There are many popular Gods*, said An- es, *but one natural one*: εἷς δὲ ὢν πολυωνυμός ἐστι; *really one*, saith the author *de Mundo, he hath names; according to the several affections he dis- and the operations he exerts*: with whom Seneca grees: *So often as you please, you may diversely the Author of things: there may be so many appel- of him, as there be gifts or offices and operations; ir people fancy to be father Bacchus, and Hercules, Mercury; call him also Nature, Fate, Fortune: all ire but names of the same God, variously using his* [a]. If they ever speak of Gods plurally, they are to derstood to speak with the like opinion of them, as f angels, that is, of invisible, intelligent powers, d by the supreme God, dependent of him, subject n;[b] Mars. Ficinus's caution concerning Plato being

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In Tim.

Cic. 1. de N. D.

Arist. de Mund. cap. 7.

jor popularitas generis humani—etiam tanta idololatria dominationem ante, seorsum tamen illum, quasi proprio nomine Deum perhibent; a Deorum; et si Deus dederit; et quod Deo placet; et Deo com- *Tertull. adv. Marc.* i. 10.

oties voles, tibi licet aliter hunc auctorem rerum nostrarum compel- t appellationes ejus esse possunt, quot munera; hunc et Liberum et Herculem, ac Mercurium nostri putant; sic hunc Naturam voca, Fortunam; omnia ejusdem Dei nomina sunt varie utentis sua potes- *ec. de Benef.* iv. 7.

: that most remarkable saying of Sophocles, (*apud Grot. in Excerpt.* 9.) ὅς ποτ' ἀληθάστατον, ὅς ἐστιν θεός, &c. *Mars. Fic. in Arg.* lib. x.

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applicable to the reſt:—*ſed ne turbet quaeſo Deorum numerus, quem non turbat numerus angelorum. Nihil enim plus apud Platonem tot poſſunt Dii, quam apud nos tot angeli, totque beati.* So much for God's *unity*.

As to his *eternity:* if God made all things, he could not receive being from another; and he who made the world, what reaſon can there be to ſuppoſe him to be from another? Nor can any thing receive a being from itſelf, or from mere nothing ſpring up into being; therefore the Maker of the world muſt be eternal. Something of neceſſity muſt be eternal, otherwiſe nothing could have been at all; other things ſhew themſelves to have proceeded from the wiſdom, power, and goodneſs of One; whence that One is eternal; and ſo all nations have conſented that God is.

That he is immortal and immutable doth alſo follow plainly: for he not depending for his being, or any thing thereto belonging, upon any other thing, neither can he depend for his continuance or conſervation; having power ſuperior to all things, as having conferred on them whatever of power they have, nothing can oppoſe him, or make any prevalent impreſſion upon him, ſo as to deſtroy or alter any thing in him.

Alſo, from his making, his upholding, his governing all things, is conſequent, that he was ever and is every where: where his power is, there his hand is; for every action with effect requires a conjunction of the agent and patient; nothing can act upon what is diſtant. That with his preſence and power he doth penetrate all things, operating inſenſibly and imperceptibly, doth argue the ſpirituality of his being; and that he doth not conſiſt of ſuch matter (ſo extended, ſo diviſible) as thoſe things do, which we by ſenſe perceive.

His overreaching wiſdom implies him uncapable of being deceived; and his overbearing power ſignifies that he doth not need to deceive; and his tranſcendent goodneſs proves him unwilling to deceive: the like we may ſay of doing wrong; whence are conſequent his perfect veracity and juſtice.

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Laſtly, the excellency of his nature, the eminency of his wiſdom and power, the abundance of his goodneſs; as alſo, his having given being, then preſerving it to all things, do infer his rightful title to ſupreme dominion; and accordingly, that all love, all obedience, all praiſe and veneration are due to him; according to the devout acknowledgment of thoſe bleſſed elders: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and honour and power,* (or authority,) *becauſe thou haſt made all things; and for thy will they are and were created.* Rev. iv. 11.

I Believe in God,

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THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM SUPER-NATURAL EFFECTS.

JOHN v. 17.

But Jesus answered them, My Father hitherto worketh, and I work.

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WHEN at first by the Divine power this visible system of things was consummated and settled in that course wherein it now stands, it is said that *God rested from all his work which he had made:* the plain meaning of which saying is, that God had so framed all the parts of nature, and several kinds of things, and disposed them into such an order, and inserted into them such principles of action, that thereafter (without more than an ordinary conservation or concourse from him) things generally should continue in their being, station, and course, without any great change, for ever; that is, for so long as God had determined, or till their due period was run through:[a] (*He established them,* as the Psalmist speaks, *for ever and ever; he made a decree, that shall not pass: His word was settled in the heavens, and his faithfulness unto all generations: they continue this day according to his ordinances:*

Gen. ii. 2.

Psal. cxlviii. 6.

Psal. cxix. 89, &c.

Jer. v. 22.

[a] Ἔστιν δ' οὖν καταστιγνύναι τὸ τὴν τάξιν τῶν γινομένων εἰς πάντα χρόνον ἀπαραβάτως φυλάσσεσθαι τετάχται, καὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς ἀταξίας ἕκαστον τῶν κτισμάτων καταστιγνύναι. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* vi. (pag. 4923.)

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e made a covenant with day and night, and appointed the dinances of heaven and earth:) thus God reſted and aſed from his work of creation. But it is not ſaid, nor ended, that God did abſolutely give over or forbear orking; that he withdrew his care, and tied up, as it ere, his own hands by a reſolution not to intermeddle ore with any thing, but to enjoy a kind of Epicurean ſe and ἀπραξία. No: his wiſdom hath ſo ordered ings, that there ſhould be need and reaſon of his acting ntinually; that there ſhould be frequent occaſion of riouſly diſplaying his glorious attributes; of exerciſing s power, of demonſtrating his goodneſs. Indeed, as to ings merely natural and unintelligent, there were no ed of his doing more; for they are all thoroughly *his* edient *ſervants*, and exactly fulfil his word; never ſtraging from the ſtation in which he placed them; never anſgreſſing the rule that he preſcribed them: but he ath alſo made other beings, by nature uncapable of ſuch niformity and ſettlement; very free, and therefore very utable; to the well governing of whom therefore a conual intention and activity is requiſite. For the uſe and nefit of which beings, as a great part of nature was degned and made by God, ſo it was not unmeet, that for eir ſake he ſhould ſometime alter the courſe of nature, d croſs or check the ſtream of things. The fuller and earer illuſtration of his glory, the ſhewing that all things not paſs on in a fatal track; the confirming that he ade nature, becauſe he can command and control it; e demonſtration of his eſpecial care over and love tord men, in ſuſpending or thwarting his own eſtabliſhed ws and decrees, as it were, for their ſake; the exciting en the more to mind God, and impreſſing on them a ſpect toward him; the begetting faith in him, and hope his providence, are fair accounts, for which God ſomeimes ſhould perform (even in a manner notorious and remarkable to us) actions extraordinary. And that God loeth ſo, we learn in the words I read from the mouth of truth itſelf; whoſe affirmation (for perſuading the incredulous) I intend to ſecond with particular inſtances, at-

Jer. xxxiii. 25. xxxi. 36.

Ἀγαθὸς γὰρ ὢν εἰ παύσεται ποτὲ ἀγαθοεργῶν, ἢ τοῦ θεὸς εἶναι παύσεται. *Clem. Alex.* ibid.

Pſal. cxix. 91. cxlviii. 8.

Iſa. xl. 26. Pſal. civ. 9, 19.

John ix. 3. Exod. vii. 5. Deut. iv. 35. Dan. iv. 25.

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teſted to by reaſonable proof, ſuitable to the nature c matter; and this with deſign to infer from ſuch o tions (as effects aſſignable to no other cauſe) the exi of God; having endeavoured formerly to deduce ſame from the common ordinary works, appearin both worlds, natural and human. And as we befor tinguiſhed the ordinary works or actions, ſo here we diſtinguiſh the extraordinary ones, into two ſorts; thoſe which are above or againſt the courſe (or powe nature; and thoſe, which ſurmount or croſs the ſtrea human affairs; ſuch as being evidenced and grante have been really performed, either all men will bel or the wiſeſt men will readily confeſs the being of ſu cauſe as we aſſert.

I. Let us firſt conſider the firſt kind: and of thei may generally affirm, that no man can deny many to have been performed, without giving the lie to moſt authentic records of hiſtory that are or have extant; without extremely diſparaging the credit of r kind; without impeaching all nations and all ages only of extreme weakneſs, (in credulous aſſent unto, garding and relying upon, ſuch appearances; which only the vulgar ſort, but even princes and ſtateſ learned men and philoſophers, every where have done,) of notorious baſeneſs and diſhoneſty, in deviſing and porting them [b]; without indeed derogating utterly all teſtimony that can be rendered to any matter of and rendering it wholly inſignificant; for that if we diſbelieve theſe reports, there is no reaſon we ſhould lieve any thing that is told us.

To this kind we may refer the preſignification and diction of future events, eſpecially thoſe which are tingent, and depend upon man's free choice; to the d of which nothing is more evident in itſelf, nor more knowledged by all, than that a power or wiſdom ſu

[b] Noſtrum quidem, inquit [Socrates,] humanum eſt conſilium, ſed bus et obſcuris et incertis ad Apollinem cenſeo referendum, ad quem Athenienſes publice de majoribus rebus ſemper retulerunt, &c. *Cic. de l* p. 206.

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is required; concerning which we have the (not ble) conſent of all times, continued down from the ſt antiquity, that frequently they have been made: 's, ſaith Cicero, *an ancient opinion, drawn even from ɔical times,* (that is, from the utmoſt bounds of time of,) *that there is among men a certain divination, the Greeks call prophecy,* (or inſpiration,) *that is, a ion, and knowledge of future things*[c]. And of this ren profane ſtory doth afford many inſtances; there having ſcarce happened any conſiderable revolu- ſtate, or action in war, whereof we do not find ned in hiſtory ſome preſignification or prediction[d]; of though many were indeed dark and ambiguous, tious and fallacious, yet ſome were very clear and , (according as God was in his wiſdom pleaſed the miniſtry of thoſe ſpirits, which immediately ed them, in directing men for their good, or miſ- g them for their deſerved puniſhment;) ſuch as for inſtance, that concerning Cyrus's conquering ydians; that concerning the battle at Salamis; ncerning the battle of Leuctres[e]; and divers others occur in ſtories compoſed by wiſe men of he nations; even the life of one man, (good So-) deſcribed by excellent perſons his moſt intimate ntance, (Xenophon and Plato,) affords divers; and acquaints us, that Chryſippus did collect (and it is pity his collection hath periſhed) an innumerable f them, all confirmed by good authority and teſti- . I cannot ſtand to relate many of them particu-

Vid. Cic. de Divin. p. 206. de Nat. Deor. ii. p. 54.

s opinio eſt jam uſque ab heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque et popuɟi et omnium hominum firmata conſenſu verſari quandam inter ho- vinationem; quam Græci μαντικὴν appellant, id eſt, præſenſionem et rerum futurarum. *De Div.*

tem quidem nullam video neque tam humanam atque doctam, ne- immanem, tamque barbaram, quæ non ſignificari futura, et a qui- ntelligi, prædicique poſſe cenſeat. *Idem.*

' ὅταν ἡμίονος, &c. *Herod.* 1.

Σάλαμις, &c. *Herod.* 7.

δί μοι σκιόντα μέλα, &c. *Pauſan.* ix. pag. 563.

git innumerabilia oracula Chryſippus, nec ullum ſine locuplete auc- e teſte. *De Div.* 172.

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larly, or discuss the validity of relations concerning such instances: I shall only say, that discourse in Tully, concerning the oracle at Delphos, which may be extended to the rest of that sort, doth not seem contemptible: *I defend*, saith he, *this one thing; that never would that oracle have been so renowned, nor so stuffed with the gifts of all nations and kings, if every age had not experienced the truth of those oracles*[f]; for it is hard, that a mere imposture should, to the expence and damage of so many persons, so long continue in credit. I will adjoin but one observation to this purpose, that even among those Pagans who regarded these things, it was known and acknowledged, that such portending, or predicting future things, although immediately conveyed by inferior powers, did originally proceed from the one Supreme God: so the wise Poet implies, when he makes the prophetic Fury say, that she received her prediction from Apollo, and Apollo from the Almighty Father;

Æneid. 3.

Accipite ergo animis, atque hæc mea figite dicta,
Quæ Phœbo Pater omnipotens, mihi Phœbus Apollo
Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima pando:

Notandum Apollinem quæ dicit a Jove cognoscere.

where Servius notes, that even Apollo (he who among their deities was in chief esteem for rendering oracles) *is said to derive his knowledge from Jove*, or the Sovereign God.

It seemed not amiss to touch those instances of this kind which profane story yields, but the holy Scriptures afford most evident and eminent ones; some of them extant in books written and in use long before the events foretold: as that of Abraham's concerning his posterity sojourning and being afflicted in Egypt four hundred years; of the Prophet concerning Josiah, (some hundred years before his birth,) that such a prince should be, and what he should do; of Isaiah concerning Cyrus *by name*, his conquests, his restoring the Jews from exile, his redifying Jerusalem; of Jeremiah concerning the cap-

Gen. xv. 13.

1 Kings xiii. 2.

Isa. xliv. & xlv.

Jer. xxv. 12. xxix. 10.

[f] Defendo unum hoc, nunquam illud oraculum Delphis tam celebre, et tam clarum fuisset, neque tantis donis refertum omnium populorum atque regum, nisi omnis ætas oraculorum illorum veritatem esset experta, &c. P. 175

d its duration for ſeventy years; of Daniel g the grand revolutions of empire in the world, the achievements of Alexander and his ſuc- e ſo plainly deſcribed, that Porphyrius could acknowledge the conſonancy of them to the of our Saviour concerning the ſiege and deſtruc- ruſalem: the truth of which reports, although l allow thoſe writings which contain them an no greater than human, there were no rea- neſtion; ſince moſt of thoſe writings were ex- d time before the events ſpecified. Now if but eſe innumerable inſtances were true, if ever one h been preſignified or predicted, (and it were a , that among ſo many not one ſhould prove ſo,) ntly evinces what we intend.

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Dan. ix. 2. Vid. Chryſ. cont. Jud. 2. tom. vi. p. 328. Dan. viii. 21, &c. Luke xix. 43. Matt. xxiv. 2.

our purpoſe eſpecially do appertain the works yled *miraculous*, which exceed or contravene the courſe or power of nature; which therefore all readily confeſs performable only by an agent in knowledge exceeding their comprehenſion, (ſuch r example, the fire being withheld from burning, vaters from flowing; the ſick being (without me- pplications) cured of long chronical diſtempers; ing (in the like manner) reſtored to perſons and ſenſes to them who from their birth (or for a long time) had been deprived of their uſe; the dead to life, (a thing which Pliny mentions ible in his conceit to God himſelf5,) and the like:) although all nations have had ſo many performed nem, as ſufficed to breed every where a conſtant that a Divine power did frequently interpoſe, ſo trol and overbear the force of nature, (which opi- d not in likelihood ſo generally and conſtantly ithout any ground at all;) yet the holy Scrip- moſt fully and clearly teſtify concerning them to n in great number performed, (for the confirma-

John iii. 2.

Φάσκω γὰρ οὐκ πάντως ἀνάλλυσθαι, οὐδὲ πολλαὶ λαοὶ φυμίζουσι.

am quidem poſſe omnia. Namque nec ſibi poteſt conſciſcere e mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos. *Nat. Hiſt.*

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tion of that divine truth and will of God, which they declare him pleafed to reveal; for guiding men into, or fettling them in, right opinions or good practices; for difabufing and withdrawing them from ways of error and vice; for the encouragement and relief of good, or the reftraint, difcouragement, and chaftifement of evil men; which in reafon are the moft proper caufes, why by fuch a Being, as we fuppofe, (fo wife, fo good,) fuch works fhould be effected;) the teftimonies concerning which there can be no good reafon affigned of refufing, but very great to admit them, as we hope at another time fatisfactorily to declare. Indeed God's patefaction of himfelf, his mind, his will, (in many kinds and manners particularly to the Fathers of old, and afterward generally to all the world by his Son; on purpofe fent from heaven to publifh and accomplifh his defigns of mercy and favour to all mankind,) accompanied with fo many prodigious works of power, and fo many glorious circumftances of providence confpicuous to all the world, and withal fo accommodated as to beget firft of all this affurance in us, that a Divine power doth exift and prefide over all affairs both natural and human, is an argument which in all honeft and well-difpofed minds (not poffeffed with falfe prejudices, nor depraved by vicious inclinations) cannot but obtain effect; the fuller urging and confirming of which I fhall refer to another feafon, when it will ferve a more general purpofe, even the confirming not only this part, but even the whole of our religion in grofs: I fhall only now briefly fay concerning them, that confidering the works themfelves, they were in number fo many and various; in kind fo great and high; as to the manner of performance fo naked and open, (being done in the face, and expofed to the fenfes of all men;) that there could be no reafon to fufpect any juggling or human artifice ufed about them: confidering the witneffes that afferted them, they were perfons who by their writings, by their behaviour, by the effect of their endeavours, approved themfelves very intelligent; in their intentions very honeft and free from any finifter defign, in their converfations very innocent and virtuous, in

tteſtation very conſiſtent and conſtant; ſo that
ould be defired no witneſſes of any fact better qua-
r more credible than they: conſidering the deſign
: works, there could be none more noble and ex-
more worthy of God, more beneficial to man;
; chiefly the confirmation of a doctrine, incompa-
e moſt reaſonable and moſt uſeful that ever ap-
among men; productive of the beſt fruits, apt (be-
ertained heartily) to make men highly good and
appy; to promote the honour of God and the in-
of goodneſs; to ſecure as much as can be both the
and private welfare of mankind. Conſidering which
we can have no good reaſon to diſtruſt the per-
ce of ſuch works, by authentic records, by con-
ddition atteſted to us.

y adjoin to the former ſorts of extraordinary actions,
her ſorts, the conſideration of which (although not
ctly and immediately) may ſerve our main deſign;
which the general opinion of mankind hath ap-
and manifold teſtimony hath declared frequently
en) which concern apparitions from another world,
re, of beings unuſual; concerning ſpirits haunting
and places, (theſe diſcerned by all ſenſes, and by
kinds of effects;) of which the old world (the an-
oets and hiſtorians) did ſpeak ſo much, and of
all ages have afforded ſeveral atteſtations very di-
d plain, and having all advantages imaginable to
credence; concerning viſions made unto perſons
cial eminency and influence, (to prieſts and pro-
concerning preſignifications of future events by
; concerning the power of enchantments, imply-
: cooperation of inviſible powers; concerning all
intercourſe and confederacy (formal or virtual)
d ſpirits: all which things he that ſhall affirm to
: fiction and deluſion, muſt thereby with exceeding
ſty and rudeneſs charge the world with extreme
nity and malignity; many, if not all, worthy hiſ-
of much inconſiderateneſs or fraud; moſt lawgivers,
t fillineſs and raſhneſs; moſt judicatories, of high

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ſtupidity or cruelty; a vaſt number of witneſſes, of the greateſt malice or madneſs; all which have concurred to aſſert theſe matters of fact.

It is true, no queſtion, but there have been many vain pretences, many falſe reports, many unjuſt accuſations, and ſome undue deciſions concerning theſe matters; that the vulgar ſort is apt enough to be abuſed about them; that even intelligent and conſiderate men may at a diſtance in regard to ſome of them be impoſed upon; but, as there would be no falſe gems obtruded, if there were no true ones found in nature; as no counterfeit coin would appear, were there no true one current; ſo neither can we well ſuppoſe that a confidence in ſome to feign, or a readineſs in moſt to believe, ſtories of this kind could ariſe, or ſhould ſubſiſt, without ſome real ground, or without ſuch things having in groſs ſomewhat of truth and reality. However, that the wiſer and more refined ſort of men, higheſt in parts and improvements both from ſtudy and experience, (indeed the flower of every commonwealth; ſtateſmen, lawgivers, judges, and prieſts,) upon ſo many occaſions of great importance, after moſt deliberate ſcanning ſuch pretences and reports, ſhould ſo often ſuffer themſelves to be deluded, to the extreme injury of particular perſons concerned, to the common abuſing of mankind, to the hazard of their own reputation in point of wiſdom and honeſty, ſeems nowiſe reaſonable to conceive. In likelihood rather the whole kind of all theſe things, were it altogether vain and groundleſs, would upon ſo frequent and ſo mature diſcuſſions have appeared to be ſo, and would conſequently long ſince have been diſowned, exploded, and thruſt out of the world; for, as upon this occaſion it is ſaid in Tully, *Time wipeth out groundleſs conceits, but confirms that which is founded in nature, and real.*

Opinionum commenta dies delet, naturæ judicia confirmat. *De Nat. Deor.* ii. pag. 54.

Now if the truth and reality of theſe things, (all or any of them,) inferring the exiſtence of powers inviſible, at leaſt inferior ones, though much ſuperior to us in all ſort of ability, be admitted, it will at leaſt (as removing the chief obſtacles of incredulity) confer much to the belief of

that ſupreme Divinity, which our diſcourſe ſtrives to maintain. SERM. IX.

I muſt acknowledge that both theſe arguments, drawn from teſtimonies concerning matters of fact, (and indeed all other arguments,) were invalid and inſignificant, could any demonſtration or any argument weighty enough be brought to ſhew the impoſſibility of ſuch a thing to exiſt, as we infer to exiſt from them. But, as it is a very eaſy thing (ſo whoever is verſed in ſpeculation and reaſoning about things cannot but find) to prove many things poſſible to be, which do not actually exiſt; ſo it is hard to prove the impoſſibility of a thing's being; yea there is plainly no other mean of doing this, than the manifeſting an evident repugnance between being itſelf, and ſome property aſſigned to that thing; or between ſeveral properties attributed thereto; as if we ſhould ſuppoſe a ſquare circle, or a round ſquare to exiſt. [h] But in our caſe no man can ſhew ſuch a repugnance; between being and wiſdom, power or goodneſs, there is no inconſiſtence ſurely; nor can any man evince one to be between being and coexiſting with matter, or penetrating body; between being and inſenſibility; between being and any other property which we aſcribe to God; nor is there any claſhing between thoſe properties themſelves: it is therefore impoſſible to ſhew that God cannot exiſt; and therefore it is unreaſonable to diſbelieve the teſtimonies (ſo many, ſo pregnant) that declare him to exiſt.

Men indeed, who affix themſelves to things which their ſenſe offers, may be indiſpoſed to abſtract their minds from ſuch things, may be unapt to frame conceptions about any other ſort of things; but to think there can be no other things than ſuch as we ſee and feel, that nothing, endued with other properties than ſuch as theſe objected to our ſenſe have, can exiſt, implies a great dul-

—affigit humi divinæ particulam auræ.

[h] It is not enough to ſay peremptorily, it is nonſenſe; or that you cannot underſtand how it ſhould be; ſuch proceedings are intolerably both inſolent and vain.

Ἀμόνητοι γὰρ εἰσιν οἱ οὐδὲν ἄλλο οἰόμενοι εἶναι, ἢ ὅ ἂν δύνωνται ἀπερίξ τοῖν χειροῖν λαβέσθαι. *Plat. Theat.*

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nefs of apprehenfion, a greater fhortnefs of reafon and judgment; it is much like the fimplicity of a ruftic, who, becaufe he never was above three miles from home, cannot imagine the world to reach ten miles farther; and will look upon all that is told him, concerning things more diftant, to be falfe, and forged to abufe him. I add, that thefe men's incredulity is hence more inexcufable, becaufe the poffibility of fuch a being's exiftence, the compatibility and concurrence of fuch properties in one thing, is (as we otherwhere have largely fhewed) by a very plain inftance declared, even by that being within every man, which in a degree partakes of all thofe properties.

I fhall leave this head of difcourfe, with this one remark; that they are much miftaken, who place a kind of wifdom in being very incredulous, and unwilling to affent to any teftimony, how full and clear foever: for this indeed is not wifdom, but the worft kind of folly. It is folly, becaufe it caufes ignorance and miftake, with all the confequents of thefe; and it is very bad, as being accompanied with difingenuity, obftinacy, rudenefs, uncharitablenefs, and the like bad difpofitions; from which credulity itfelf, the other extreme fort of folly, is exempt. Compare we, I fay, thefe two forts of fools; the credulous fool, who yields his affent haftily upon any flight ground; and the fufpicious fool, who never will be ftirred by any the ftrongeft reafon or cleareft teftimony; we fhall find the latter in moft refpects the worft of the two; that his folly arifes from worfe caufes, hath worfe adjuncts, produceth worfe effects. Credulity may fpring from an airy complexion, or from a modeft opinion of one's felf; fufpiciousnefs hath its birth from an earthy temper of body, or from felf-conceit in the mind: that carries with it being civil and affable, and apt to correct an error; with this a man is intractable, unwilling to hear, ftiff and incorrigible in his ignorance or miftake: that begets fpeed and alacrity in action; this renders a man heavy and dumpifh, flow and tedious in his refolutions and in his proceedings: both include want of judgment; but this pretending

more thereof, becomes thereby more dangerous. Forward rashness, which is the same with that, may sometimes, like an acute disease, undo a man sooner; but stupid dotage, little differing from this, is (like a chronical distemper) commonly more mischievous, and always more hard to cure. In fine, were men in their other affairs, or in ordinary converse, so diffident to plain testimony, as some do seem to be in these matters concerning religion, they would soon feel great inconveniences to proceed thence; their business would stick, their conversation would be distasteful; they would be much more offensive, and no less ridiculous than the most credulous fool in the world. While men therefore so perversely distrustful affect to seem wise, they affect really to be fools; and practise according to the worst sort of folly.

Thus have I, although very cursorily, considered the first kind of works extraordinary that appear in the world: I proceed briefly to touch the other sort, observable in the transaction of human affairs; for even in these there do happen things in a sort miraculous, or prodigious; according to reasonable estimation surpassing the common efficacy of human causes; by which God in a language more express, as it were, and in a louder tone, declares his presence and providence here; so that they must be very deaf and stupid, who do not from them learn lessons of piety and reverence toward God; who do not in them hear Heaven thundering forth that proclamation to us all: *Discite justitiam moniti.* For instance,

1. We may observe, when any where things are come to such a pass, that iniquity and outrage do extremely prevail, so that the most of men's lives become intolerably grievous, that in such cases often the state of things, how seemingly stable and robust soever, in a manner sudden and strange, by means to appearance small and weak, to be overturned, and reduced to a more tolerable form; no strugglings of might, no fetches of policy, no circumspection or industry of man availing to uphold it, an invisible hand checking all such force, and crossing all such devices. *A stone cut out of the mountains without hands,* Dan. ii. 45.

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(that is, a ſlender inſtrument coming forth out of ſome remote or ſecret place, without any conſiderable influence of human endeavour,) *breaking in pieces the iron, and the braſs, the clay, the ſilver, and the gold;* there being raiſed up inſtantly a Moſes, or a Maccabæus; an Ehud, or a Gideon; a Dion, or a Timoleon, by a ſingle ſtroke, or a ſudden impreſſion, to deliver oppreſſed nations from ſlavery.

2. How many examples do experience and hiſtory afford us of juſtice and vengeance, in ways for their kind and for their circumſtances very remarkable, executed in the face of the world upon perſons (ſuch as Corah and his fellows, Sennacherib, Herod, Brennus) notoriouſly wicked and miſchievous, who have outbraved Heaven by their impiety, or horribly abuſed mankind by their injuſtice!

3. Yea, we may take notice, that even few of those men, whoſe actions have been illuſtrious for greatneſs void
Dan. iv. 17. of goodneſs; who have climbed to height of power and ſtate by the ruins and ſlaughters of mankind; that, I ſay, few of ſuch perſons have departed off the ſtage in peace or honour. That Alexander was ſnapt in the flower of his age and glory; that Cæſar was no ſooner arrived to the top of his fortune, than to the bottom of his life; neither having time allowed them to enjoy, ſcarce to taſte, thoſe fruits which they ſo eagerly ſought and toiled for; both perhaps (one without any peradventure) being ſpeeded away by violent and treacherous hands. Not to mention Pompey or Hannibal, or other ſuch like men of exorbitant ambition, whoſe fortunes were ſo ſtrangely changed, and whoſe ends were ſo diſmal.

4. We may however obſerve, that few great tyrants and oppreſſors, few perſons inſolently profane or ſacrilegious, have eſcaped the viſible ſtroke of Divine vengeance; a ſtroke inflicted in ways not only violent, but ſhameful; and that uſually by means moſt unexpected, by the hands of their own guards, their own ſervants, their own favourites, the very inſtruments of their miſchief, and theſe ſtirred up by ſlight cauſes, by ſome little diſgrace or diſ-

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ived by them from their master[i]. What a long
gend of Caligula's, Nero's, Domitian's, Com-
Heliogabalus's, Maximinus's,[k] may any man's
on even out of profane histories easily compose,
ı the Divine justice in such ways hath rid the

Ps. lxxxiii. 17, 18.

night also mention the judgments of God upon
and families raised to wealth and splendor of
r oppression, fraud, sacrilege, rapine, or such bad
whose estates without any visible ordinary means
der and decay; a secret moth devouring them;
which falls under common observation.
e same providence hath more clearly discovered
he strange detections of murders, and other enor-
ischiefs committed in darkness, and revealed by
unaccountably darted from Heaven. Of which
only books, but common experience doth furnish
ies and instances very remarkable both for num-
weight.
e like strange discoveries of plots, contrived se-
gainst the public peace, and against the lives of
frequently offer themselves in story, and the like
ce suggests concerning private men; *a bird of the*
ring the voice of the wicked traitor to the ears of
o is designed against; *the stones of the wall crying*
on and murder. Yea, generally, according to the
's observation, when men have *encouraged them-*
an evil matter, and have communed about laying
ivily—saying, who shall see them?—God doth shoot
with an arrow, suddenly they are wounded. So
men have reason, as he adds they will do, *to fear,*
declare the work of God, if they *wisely consider his*
and himself had reason to pronounce in another
The Lord is known by the judgment that he exe-
the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.
might adjoin the remarkable providences which

Eccl. x. 20.

Hab. ii. 11.

Psal. lxiv. 5, 7.

Psal. ix. 16.

nd. Pheræus, ab uxore occisus. Vid. *Plut. in Pelopida ad fin.*
ch as Sejanus, Ruffinus, Eutropius, &c. Stilico, &c.

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also occur, concerning the recompenses and encouragements of virtue; in the protecting good men from imminent dangers, delivering them from grievous straits, supplying them in extreme needs, prospering them in their undertakings, raising them (as Joseph, David, Daniel, &c.) by wonderful means to wealth and dignity, for their own encouragement, or for public benefit; concerning which occurrences the Psalmist had reason to say, *Whoso is wise will observe these things, and they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord.*

Ps. xxxvii. 25. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken.

Ps. cvii. 43.

These considerations, with divers others of the same kind, grounded on Providence, I must confess have not singly taken, the greatest force and evidence to infer our purpose, nor can they with the same assurance and peremptoriness be urged to every adversary or disbeliever, as some other arguments may; those, which we have formerly insisted on, drawn from nature. For in nature, all causes there being themselves destitute of immediate reason or choice, and subject to no chance or contingency, (properly so called,) we may indeed confidently ascribe all effects, in which any reason or counsel doth appear, whether ordinary or extraordinary, to Divine efficacy; there being no other cause, to which we can reasonably impute them: but in human affairs, seeing man is an understanding and free agent, and few effects happen without some act of his intervening, there can hardly occur any passage, how rare and strange soever, which our incredulous adversaries, with some kind of colour or plausible shift, will not be ready to attribute unto some reach of man's wit, or to some *capricio* of his humour, or to some unaccountable casualty, incident to matters of this kind; (as we see the Philistines were apt to impute the plague of emerods to chance; the Israelites did presently charge that terrible judgment on Corah and his complices upon Moses and Aaron.) And commonly Divine and human influences upon these effects (even as in nature the influences of Heaven and of inferior particular causes) are so complicated and interwoven together, that it is not so easy to distinguish the one from the other, either in whole

Vid. Claud. in Ruffin. lib. 1. init. eleganter hac de re differentem.

Sen. de Provid. init.

1 Sam. vi. 9.

Numb. xvi. 41.

or in part, to separate the bounds of providence ordinary and extraordinary, to discern what God performs by usual instruments, what by his immediate hand. As also the actions of the wisest men are often grounded upon reasons remote from, and impenetrable by, vulgar conceit; so are the reasons of God's proceedings with men various and often mysterious; above the reach of our capacity with distinction to apprehend them: as who, for instance, can oftentimes readily distinguish between God's merciful patience toward bad men, and his gracious recompensing the good; between God's just vengeance on the one sort, and his fatherly correction of the other; between his reclaiming one from vice, either, as particular circumstances require, by adverse or prosperous events, and his trying or exercising the other's virtue by the like proceedings? Who can distinguish between what is performed or permitted upon general or upon particular accounts; in respect to the public, or in regard to private men; in relation to present times, or to posterity; upon absolute and immediate accounts, or in order to some farther, more remote designs? Who, I say, can pretend skill enough to define what or how much is best to be done in these cases; when it is fit to allow men to proceed in the use of their freedom, when to interrupt them? Who, but he that exactly knows the limits of just and fit, the qualities and tempers of men, the state and circumstances of every thing?

I add, that God's governance of things hath no complete issue here; that this is not the only nor the chief place of dispensing rewards and punishments; that things are but doing here; and not done; in a progress and tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a state of final resolution or perfection: wherefore as we cannot fully judge of an artificial work by its first draughts, nor of a poem by some scenes, but must stay till all is finished and acted through; so we cannot so clearly discern the entire wisdom and justice of Divine dispensations here; not till that day, when, as St. Paul tells us, God's δικαιοκρισία, *his righteous judgment, shall be made apparent.* Whence dis

Rom. ii. 5.
Psal. x. 5.

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courſe grounded upon preſent events may not prove ſ convincing or ſatisfactory, except unto the children wiſdom, who by a ſharper ſenſe can diſcover even t ſmaller lines and more occult tracts of God's hand; w with an eſpecial attention and ſagacity do, as the Proph

Pſ. xxviii. 5. Iſa. v. 12.

expreſſeth it, *regard the works of the Lord, and confid the operations of his hands.* However, the frequent o currences in human affairs of paſſages, ſuch as we men tioned, ſo rare and remarkable, if they do not, ſingly a ſolitarily taken, thoroughly ſerve to demonſtrate the hy potheſis of Divine providence, yet at leaſt they do muc favour and ſtrengthen it, being very congruous thereto Suppoſing ſuch a Providence, it is moſt probable (I may ſay neceſſary) that ſuch events would happen; whence there can be no abſurdity in aſcribing them thereto, but much of reaſon in doing it. They are *digni vindice nodi*, difficulties not otherwiſe eaſily reſolved, and therefore God may be moſt fitly introduced, as the moſt probable cause of them; if ſtrict diſcourſe cannot compel us, yet ingenuity will incline us, and wiſdom will oblige us, to do ſo.

Pſ. cvii. 43. lxiv. 5, 7.

They that are wiſe will conſider theſe things, and they ſhall underſtand the lovingkindneſs (I add, and alſo both the

Pſ. xcii. 6.

wiſdom and power) *of the Lord. A brutiſh man knoweth not, neither doth a fool underſtand this*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, concerning the proceedings of Providence.

But however general providence doth work in convincing ſome, particular providence will at leaſt produce that effect in many: for I dare appeal to moſt men (to thoſe eſpecially, who have ever had any fear of God, or ſenſe of goodneſs in them,) if, ſometime or other, in their lives, they have not in their preſſing needs and ſtraits (eſpecially upon their addreſſes to God for help) found help and comfort conveyed unto them by an inſenſible hand; if they have not ſometimes in a manner unaccountable eſcaped imminent dangers; if they have not in the performance of their duty and devotion toward God experienced a comfort more than ordinary; if they cannot

Pſ. xxxiv. 6, 7, 8. cxlv. 18, 19.

to ſome events of their life aptly apply thoſe obſervations of the Pſalmiſt: *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard*

im, and delivered him out of his troubles. The angel of SERM. IX.
he Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good. O taste and see; he appeals to experience; he supposes the Divine goodness may be seen and felt; that surely will be a most efficacious argument of God's existence and providence. And so it is indeed to all good men, for whose (1 John v. 10.)
comfort and confirmation it is chiefly mentioned, though it is not likely to have much influence upon them, who have alienated themselves from God, and driven him *out* Psal. x. 4.
of their thoughts; except they should (beyond what can be expected from them) be so civil and candid, as to believe the testimony of others, who assert this great truth unto them from their own inward conscience and experience.

But let thus much serve, at present, for the shewing that *God doth*, as our Lord tells us, *hitherto work;* and consequently that, as we thence meant to infer, God doth exist.

The Father,

SERMON X.

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER.

EPH. iv. 6.

One God and Father of all.

SERM. X. I HAVE formerly discoursed concerning the nature of that belief which we here profess: I did also endeavour by several arguments to evince the truth and credibility of the first article of our Creed, which is indeed the foundation of all the rest, and of all religion, *That there is one God.* I proceed to the following parts.

The Father. The appellation of God not improperly taken, (as when it is attributed to creatures, upon some resemblance in nature or office which they bear to the supreme God,) but relating to him who only, truly, and properly is styled God, is sometimes put absolutely, sometime hath a relative apposition going along with it. Being absolutely or singly put, it sometimes refers, by way of eminency, particularly to the first Person in the blessed and glorious Trinity; as when Christ is called the *Son of God;* when God is put in distinction from the other Persons, (when, for instance, it is said, *That they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Word was with God. To serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven.* And in that

form of bleſſing, *The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt be with you all;*) but commonly it is to be underſtood for God eſſentially conſidered, (according to the Divine eſſence common to all three Perſons,) to whom in that reſpect all the Divine attributes agree, and from whom all Divine operations (*abſolute et ad extra*) do jointly proceed. And to this ſenſe or notion we have hitherto ſuppoſed that the name of God might be here applied. For, that there is one God, having ſuch eſſential attributes, is the firſt principle and foundation of all religion, which we muſt therefore ſuppoſe, if not directly expreſſed, yet at leaſt ſufficiently implied in the Creed. SERM. X.

And ſuppoſing the word in part doth imply this ſenſe, the attribute or title of Father doth upon many accounts truly and properly belong to God, (God abſolute and eſſential,) in relation to all things generally, and to ſome things particularly; eſpecially, which is the moſt fruitful conſideration, in reſpect to ourſelves.

Let us firſt conſider the accounts upon which, then the terms (or objects) in relation to which, God is ſo called; then let us apply the conſideration to practice.

One God and Father of all.

Every attribute, every title, every relation of God doth ground an obligation, doth afford an inducement to good practice; but none other doth ground higher obligation, or yieldeth ſtronger inducement to all kinds of obedience, than doth this of *Father*, which here, and frequently otherwhere in holy Scripture, is aſcribed to God: unto which purpoſe, of exciting us to good practice, (to all good practice generally, and particularly to ſome kinds thereof,) I do now intend to apply the conſideration thereof: but firſt let us conſider in what reſpects, or upon what grounds, this title is attributed to God; then let us reflect ſomewhat upon the term, in reſpect to which God is ſtyled *Father of all*, that is, in a larger ſenſe of all things, in a ſtricter ſenſe of all perſons, in the moſt reſtrained ſenſe of all us Chriſtians.

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The title of *father* is upon ſeveral accounts commonly given to things; one is cauſality; for the efficient cauſe, or author of any thing, is called its father; any work is ſaid to be the child, or offspring, of him that maketh or inventeth it; *Hath the rain a father,* (or, *Who is father of the rain?* as the LXX render it,) *or who hath begotten the drops of the dew?* ſaith God in Job: another ground thereof is ſuſtenance, or preſervation; ſo Job ſaith of himſelf, that *he was a father to the poor and fatherleſs*; becauſe he yielded them protection and relief; ſo, *Roma patrem patriæ Ciceronem libera dixit,* Rome called Cicero father, becauſe he preſerved it from the attempts of wicked conſpirators againſt its liberty and ſafety: education alſo and inſtruction entitle to this name; whence St. Paul calleth Timothy and Philemon, the Corinthians and Galatians, whom he had inſtructed in the Chriſtian faith, his *children:* laſtly, governance, attended with beneficent affection and care, doth found this appellation; whence princes are uſually ſtyled the *fathers of their country,* being ſuppoſed to deſire and to provide for the public good; ſo we have the *fathers of tribes,* that is, the principal perſons of them, who did preſide over them: I do omit antiquity and age, for which we know that perſons are vulgarly called fathers.

Job xxxviii. 28.

Job xxix. 16. xxxi. 18.

1 Tim. i. 2. Philem. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 15. Gal. iv. 19.

Joſh. xix. 51. xxi. 1.

Upon all theſe accounts it is plain that the title of Univerſal Father may truly be aſcribed unto God; eſpecially in reſpect to ourſelves, who may be conſidered as equivalent to all other objects, as comprehending in us ſomewhat common to them all: God in ſome of thoſe reſpects is the Father of all things, or of us as beings; God is more eſpecially the Father of intelligent beings, and of us as ſuch; God is the Father of all men, of all good men, and peculiarly of Chriſtians; which reſpects all of them do or ſhould concur in us. Let us ſurvey thoſe particulars ſomewhat diſtinctly, then apply them as obligations and inducements to good practice.

1. God is the Father of all things, or of us as creatures; as the efficient cauſe and creator of them all: *He made the world,* as St. Paul telleth the Athenians, *and all things*

Acts xvii. 24. xiv. 15.

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herein; He commanded, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *and they were created; The world and the fulneſs thereof*, (that is, all wherewith it is repleniſhed, and which it contains,) *he hath founded them; All theſe things*, ſaith God in the Prophet, *hath mine hand made:* and ποιητὴν, καὶ πατέρα τῶνδε τοῦ παντὸς, *the Maker and Father of this univerſe*, even Plato ſtyleth God. God is alſo the Father of all things, becauſe he preſerveth and ſuſtaineth them by his power; *He*, ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrews, *beareth up all things by the word of his power*; *He*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *hath eſtabliſhed them for ever and ever; he made a decree which ſhall not paſs*, by virtue of which they ſubſiſt: alſo becauſe he by a continual care doth provide for them; *They all*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *wait upon him, that he may give them their meat in due ſeaſon; what he giveth them, they gather; he openeth his hand, they are filled with good:* he alſo governeth, and containeth them in good order; for, *his kingdom ruleth over all*; and, *whatſoever the Lord pleaſeth, that doeth he in heaven and earth:* all this he doeth with goodneſs and affection; for, *his tender mercies are over all his works:* whence even among Pagans the word *Pater* abſolutely put, did ſignify the *Supreme God*, they underſtanding thereby the Author, Preſerver, and Governor of all things; and *Pater omnipotens* is the periphraſis, whereby the wiſeſt Poet doth uſually expreſs God[a].

Pſal. cxlv. 15. cxlvi. 6. lxxxix. 11. xxxiii. 6. Iſa. lxvi. 1. xl. 26. Plat. in Tim. pag. 1047. Heb. i. 3. Pſal. cxlv. 15. Pſal. civ. 27. cxlv. 15. Iſa. xl. 26. Pſal. cxv. 3. ciii. 19. cxxxv. 6. cxlvii. 15. cxlv. 9.

2. More eſpecially God is the Father of intellectual beings; he is ſtyled *the Father of ſpirits:* particularly the angels in way of excellency are called the ſons of God: *There was a day when the ſons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord:* and, *When the morning ſtars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy;* in which place of Job the LXX. have ἄγγελοί μου, *my angels;* (although perhaps there all God's creatures may be underſtood rejoicing and exulting, as it were, in their being, newly by the goodneſs of their Maker conferred on

Heb. xii. 9. Num. xvi. 22. Job i. 6. Job xxxviii. 7.

[a] —— o Pater, et Rex Jupiter— *Hor. Serm.* ii. 1.
—— Pater ipſe colendi
Haud facilem eſſe viam voluit— *Virg. Georg.* i. 121.
Ζεῦ πάτερ ἠμέτερε Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρείοντων. *Hom.* Il. Θ. 31.

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them:) again, *Who*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *in heaven can b compared unto the Lord? who among the ſons of the might can be likened unto the Lord?* the ſons of the mighty; i is in the Hebrew, *the ſons of God*, and ſo the LXX. rend it; and what precedeth, *who in heaven*, doth make it, a it ſeems, beſt interpretable of the angels. Of ſuch being God is more eſpecially the Father, becauſe he did produ them in a more excellent manner; for other things h made as it were by his hand, theſe he breathed out of h mouth; as it is ſaid of Adam, when God infuſed his fo into his body, that *God breathed into his noſtrils the breat of life;* becauſe they more nearly reſemble God in the nature and properties, (in ſpirituality, and independenc upon matter; in life, and ſelf-moving; in immortality and perpetuity of being; in underſtanding, and wiſdom in will, and goodneſs; or in a capacity at leaſt of ſuch pe fections;) becauſe alſo he ruleth them in a nobler way; way, not of blind and conſtrained obedience, but of wil and free choice, according to laws of juſtice, by obliga tions of ingenuity; becauſe he likewiſe beareth a mo dear affection unto them, and a peculiar care over them in reſpect to theſe beings indeed the relation of father i more proper, becauſe they only can be ſenſible thereo and capable to render the duties of piety, gratitude, an willing obedience ſuitable thereto; *Rational beings*, ſait an Ethnic philoſopher, *are the ſons of God, becauſe th only are naturally fit to converſe with God, being conjoin to him by participation of reaſon*[b]: and thus indeed eve the Pagan theologers, commonly from primitive gener tradition we may ſuppoſe, did conceive the Supreme Go to be the Father of the gods, (intending not ſuch gods a were of man's deviſing, creatures deified by the flattery o fondneſs of the vulgar, but of higher rank, anſwering to o angels, whom they ſuppoſed as to approach in excellenc of nature neareſt to God, ſo to have derived their bein from him, and to attend conſtantly upon him, partakin

Pſ. lxxxix. 6. xxix. 1.

Gen. ii. 7.

Pſal. ciii. 20.

b Ὅτι κοινωνεῖν μόνον ταῦτα πέφυκε τῷ Θεῷ τῆς συναναστροφῆς κατὰ τὸν λόγον ἐ πεπλεγμένα. *Arr. Epict.* i. 9.

of his glory, and obſerving his pleaſure;) whence *Divûm pater, Father of the gods*, is a common periphraſis, or title of God among them; and particularly in the *Timæus* of Plato there is an oration, which he repreſenteth God making unto thoſe creatures preſently upon their creation, beginning thus; *O ye chief gods, of whom I am the Framer and Father;* concerning which gods that which he can ſay, he pretendeth to deduce from ancient original tradition. But to come nearer to our more particular concernment.

Θεοὶ θεῶν, ὧν ἐγὼ δημιουργὸς, πατήρ τε—

3. God is the Father, in a more eſpecial manner, of mankind: *Have we not*, ſaith the Prophet, *one Father? hath not one God created us?* and Adam is called *the ſon of God*, the genealogy of all men terminating in him; and, We are *all God's offspring*, ſaith St. Paul: we are ſo, for that *his hands made and faſhioned our bodies;* and for that he *formed our ſpirit within us*, as the Prophet ſpeaketh. He made us *after his own image*, ſo as ſignally to repreſent and reſemble himſelf, in properties of nature, and in eminence of condition; in this great family of viſible creatures he hath aſſigned unto us the principal ſtation, ſo that other creatures there are but as ſervants waiting on us; we are as children, depending only on him; he hath ſhewed an eſpecial tenderneſs of affection and good-will toward us, in providing for us all manner of needful ſuſtenance and comfortable accommodation; continually watching over us for our good, and *holding us up*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaketh, *from our mother's womb*; beſtowing on us good education, (inſtructing us by the light of nature, or dictates of natural reaſon and conſcience, by civil converſation, by the precepts of wiſe men, and examples of virtuous perſons, by providential encouragements to good, and determents from evil; together with the ſecret whiſpers, advices, and motions of his grace;) bearing with exceſſive patience our infirmities, miſcarriages, and offences; uſing ſeaſonable and moderate chaſtiſements to reclaim us from bad courſes to thoſe which our duty and our advantage do require: in ſhort, all God's dealings and demeanor toward mankind do argue in him a paternal re-

Mal. ii. 10. Luke iii. 38. Acts xvii. 29. Job x. 8. Pſ. cxxxix. 15, 16. Zech. xii. 1. Pſal. xxxiii. 15. Gen. i. 27. Pſal. lxxi. 6.

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gard thereto: whence even the blind Heathens discerned and acknowledged this general relation of God to men; and, *Gentis humanæ Pater, atque custos*, (*O Father, and keeper of mankind!*) was an invocation suitable to their notion concerning him: from him they deduced our original; to him they ascribed the formation of our bodies, so full of wonderful artifice; from him they affirm our souls to be extracted; from his goodness and care they supposed all the conveniences of life which we enjoy to be derived; they conceived him to bear a kind affection unto man, and to have a constant care over him; as by many express testimonies might be shewed, and from their practices evidently may be inferred [c].

Hor. Carm. i. 12. Epist. i. 3, 9.

Charior est illis homo, quam sibi.

4. Farther, yet more especially God is the Father of all good men; such a relation being yet built upon higher grounds and respects; for as *good* they have another original from him; virtue springeth in their hearts from a heavenly seed; that emendation and perfection of nature is produced by his grace enlightening and quickening them: they are images of him, resembling him in judgment and disposition of mind, in will and purpose, in action and behaviour; the which resemblances do argue them to be the sons of God, and indeed do constitute them such; for, *Love your enemies*, saith our Lord, *bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you—that you may be the sons of your Father in heaven*; and, *Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing thence; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the sons of the Most High.* Imitation of God in goodness and beneficence doth, we see, found a filial relation unto God: to such, God answerably doth bear a paternal kindness and compassion; for, *Like as a father pitieth his children, so*, saith the Psalmist, *the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* He in all respects dealeth with them as with his children; ὡς υἱοῖς προσφέρεται, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh: he teacheth and guideth them with wholesome advice upon

Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est. *Sen. Epist.* 41.

1 Pet. i. 23.

Matt. v. 44, 45.

Luke vi. 35.

Psal. ciii. 13.

Heb. xii. 7.

[c] Omnes si ad primam originem revocentur, a Diis sunt. *Sen. Ep.* 44. A natura divina hauftos animos, et delibutos habemus. *Cic. de Div.* 1.

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fions; for, *What man is he that feareth the Lord? ll he teach in the way that he shall choose;* and, *The a good man are ordered by the Lord:* he gently re- and correcteth them; *Whom,* saith the Wise Man, *eth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom hteth:* he maintaineth them with all needful suste- nd accommodation without their care or trouble; *e no care,* saith our Saviour, *saying, What shall we What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be —for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have all these things;* he so knoweth and considereth it, ovide, that *there shall not be,* as the Psalmist affirm- *y want unto them that fear him:* he protecteth om all danger, supporteth them in all distress, and them from all mischief; for, *His eyes are open e righteous—to deliver his soul from death, and to n alive in famine; he keepeth all his bones, so that them is broken—though he fall, he shall not utterly lown, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand; re his afflictions, but the Lord delivereth him out of* ch paternal affections doth God bear, such pater- doth he exercise, toward good men; the which gan wise men did apprehend; of whom one thus th himself; *God,* saith he, *hath a fatherly mind good men, and strongly loveth them—between them d there is a friendship which virtue doth conciliate; ship, do I say? yea, a kindred and similitude; for that man is God's disciple and imitator, and his true g, whom that magnificent Father, no softly exacter e, doth, after the manner of severe parents, educate*

Pſal. xxv. 12. xxxvii. 23. Prov. iii. 12. Matt. vi. 31. vii. 11. Pſal. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 11. Pſ. xxxiii. 18, 19. Pſ. xxxiv. 20. xxxvii. 24. Pſ. xxxiv. 19. Patrium habet Deus adverſus bonos viros animum, et illos fortiter amat, &c. *Sen. de Provid.* 1. 2.

Ve may farther obſerve, that God in his proceed- th men, whereby he particularly deſigneth to con- em within bounds of duty, and thereby to lead nto happineſs, delighteth to repreſent himſelf un- obliging and endearing relation: thus he did in to his ancient people upon all occaſions expreſs; *Who are Iſraelites, whoſe is the adoption,* ſaith St. Rom. ix. 4.

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Paul, reckoning this as the first of those privileges which appertain to the Jews: it was the commission to Moses; *Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn; and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me:* Moses also, foreseeing how that people would misbehave themselves, doth thus in God's name expostulate with them; *Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy Father that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee:* David also thus addresseth himself to God in their behalf; *Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever: thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty:* and, *Doubtless,* saith Isaiah, *thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting:* and, *I am,* saith God in Jeremiah, *a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn; Is Ephraim my dear son, is he a pleasant child? he is,* the LXX. render it, in way of assertion, not

Exod. iv 22.

Deut. xxxii. 6, 18.

1 Chron. xxix. 10, 11.

Is. lxiii. 16 xlv. 2, 24 xlvi. 3

Jer xxxi. 9, 20

the performances of God toward us, and in our behalf, are of such a nature, and are set out in such terms, as do sound and import this relation: for,

1. The reception of a believer into the participation of the privileges and advantages which Christianity tendereth, is termed υἱοθεσία, the making him a son; the adopting him into God's family, the conferring upon him the title and quality of God's child; together with the internal disposition of mind, and the liberty of access and intercourse, which do suit that relation: *Whosoever*, saith St. John, *did receive him, to them he gave the power* (or privilege) *to become the sons of God, even to them who believed in his name:* and, *Ye are all*, saith St. Paul, *the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus;* that is, by sincerely embracing Christianity: and, *Behold*, saith St. John again, *what manner of love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God:* and, *Ye have not received the spirit of servitude unto fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father;* that is, by which in our prayers with humble affection we freely, confidently, and readily, according to our Saviour's institution, do say, *Our Father*.

Gal. iv. 5. Eph. i. 5. ii. 19. Rom. viii. 15. John i. 12. Gal. iii. 26. 1 John iii. 1. (Eph. iii. 15.) Rom. viii. 15. Gal. iv. 6.

2. That renovation of our nature, and qualifying our minds, as the Gospel prescribeth and requireth, is called regeneration, a new creation, a new birth, the begetting a new man within us: *If a man be not born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God;* that is, he cannot be a good Christian: *Whoever is begot of God doth not sin;* that is, good Christians do not live in a course of disobedience: *We are* αὐτοῦ ποίημα, *God's work*, or production, *being created in Christ Jesus to good works: Ye have been taught—to put on the new man, that is created according to the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.* In such terms is the effect of the Christian dispensation upon our hearts and lives described; and that with the greatest reason; for no act of God toward us can be more fatherly, than working in us by his grace the principles of Christian life, and the practices springing from it; nothing doth nearer advance us to a similitude with God, and a *participation of the Di-*

John iii. 3. 1 John iii. 9. Eph. ii. 10. Eph. iv. 21, 24. Col. iii. 10. 2 Pet. i. 4.

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vine nature; nothing doth conciliate from God a more tender affection to us, or worketh in us a more dutiful affection toward him, anſwerable to this relation, than doth a hearty compliance with the grace of the Goſpel.

3. The reſurrection of good Chriſtians after death to a better ſtate of life, their entering into immortal bliſs and glory, is worthily ſtyled παλιγγενεσία, a being generated and born again; whereby they receive from God another more excellent life and ſtate of being, more like and conformable to God: for, *We know*, ſaith St. John, *that if he ſhall appear*, (or, that when he ſhall appear, as ſome copies read it,) *we ſhall be like him;* and, *As*, ſaith St. Paul, *we have borne the image of the earthly* (Adam,) *we ſhall alſo bear the image of the heavenly: We ſhall*, ſaith he, *be metamorphoſed*, or transfigured, *into the ſame image:* and, *They*, ſaith our Saviour, *which ſhall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the reſurrection of the dead—are the ſons of God, being the ſons of the reſurrection:* that ſtate of bliſs is therefore ſtyled a portion or inheritance, allotted to ſons, and conſequent upon ſuch a relation: *If ſons*, ſaith St. Paul, *then heirs; heirs of God, and coheirs with Chriſt, receiving the reward and promiſe of an eternal inheritance: Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ſaith St. Peter, *who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for us.*

1 Joh. iii. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 49. 2 Cor. iii. 18. Phil. iii. 21. Luke xx. 35, 36. Matt. xix. 28. Gal. iv. 7. Rom. viii. 17. Col. iii. 24. Heb. ix. 15. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

4. I might adjoin, that Chriſtian men do become the ſons of God by the intervention of our Saviour, aſſuming our nature, and conforming himſelf to the likeneſs of men; whereby he becomes *the firſtborn of many brethren: God*, ſaith St. Paul, *ſent forth his ſon, born of a woman, that we might receive the privilege of being made ſons:* and, *Children*, ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrews, *partake of fleſh and blood;* whence (as he meaneth to infer) our Lord being the Son of God, we upon conjunction of nature with him, and as his brethren, become alſo ſuch: he farther intimateth, that upon this ſcore we do

Phil. ii. 7. Rom. viii. 3, 29. Gal. iv. 4, 5. Heb. ii. 11, 14.

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ſurpaſs angels themſelves; for that *he took not on him the nature of angels, but took on him the ſeed of Abraham;* they were not, as we, dignified with a fraternal relation to the Son of God. Heb. ii. 16.

In ſo many ſeveral reſpects is God our Father; we are his children, as being his creatures, made, preſerved, and maintained by him; as we are intellectual creatures, being placed in degree and quality of nature ſo near him; as we by virtue and goodneſs (produced in us by his grace) do anywiſe approach him, reſemble him, and partake of his ſpecial favour; as we are Chriſtians, adopted into his heavenly family, renewed by his holy grace, and deſtinated to a participation of his eternal glory.

Now the conſideration of theſe grounds, (each one of them, and all of them together,) upon which this relation of God unto us is founded, hath manifold good uſes; it is apt to inform and admoniſh us concerning many neceſſary duties reſulting from it; and to enforce upon us the practice of them.

1. It in general may teach, and ſhould mind us, what reverence, honour, and obſervance is due from us unto God, in equity and juſtice, according to ingenuity and gratitude: *If,* ſaith God in the Prophet, *I be a Father, where is my honour?* Our believing and acknowledging this relation is vain, if we do not yield the reſpects, and perform the duties anſwerable thereto. And if indeed we are obliged to love, to reſpect, to obſerve thoſe, who have been the inſtruments of God in producing, in nouriſhing, in breeding us, how much more are we bound to yield the ſame to him, who principally did, who continually doth, beſtow upon us our being, together with all the ſupports, the conveniences, the comforts thereof; from whoſe free bounty we derive not only the benefits of this tranſitory life, but the ineſtimable privileges and bleſſings relating to the future incomparably better ſtate? If we neglect our duty ſo grounded, may not God juſtly expoſtulate with us, as he did of old with thoſe children of his: *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people, and unwiſe: Is he not thy Father, who bought thee?* (or rather, who got thee, Mal i. 6. Deut. xxxii. 6, 18.

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ὃς ἐκτήσατό σε, ſaith the Greek; and both that and the Hebrew do agree in expreſſion of that thing with our common manner of ſpeech;) *hath not he made thee, and eſtabliſhed thee?* It is, as is there intimated, a part of extreme folly, no leſs than of injuſtice and ingratitude, to diſregard and diſobey him, to whom by ſuch bands of duty and obligation we are allied: indeed the excellency of God's nature doth juſtly require honour and reverence to him; his ſovereign power may alſo reaſonably extort obedience from us; but his paternal benevolence and beneficence are the moſt obliging grounds, the moſt kindly inducements, to the practice of all piety toward him: we are fooliſhly unworthy in not being good on the other accounts; in not being ſo for theſe reaſons we are monſtrouſly baſe.

2. This conſideration may inſtruct and admoniſh us what we ſhould be, and how we ſhould behave ourſelves; for that, if we be God's children, it becometh us, and we are obliged, in our diſpoſition and demeanor, to reſemble, to imitate him: it is natural and proper for children to reſemble their parents in their complexion and countenance; to imitate them in their actions and carriage: *If ye*, argueth our Lord, *were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham;* ye would imitate him in readily believing and obeying God: and, *Ye*, ſaith he again, *are of your father the Devil, becauſe ye perform the luſts of your father;* becauſe in his envious, treacherous, murderous diſpoſition and practice, ye reſemble him: ſo if we be God's children, we muſt, according to St. Paul's exhortation, *imitate God, as dear children;* we muſt, in all imitable perfections, ſtrive to be like him; ſo doth the Scripture frequently (both in general, and as to particular caſes or matters) apply and inculcate this point: God is holy and pure, ſo therefore ought we to be; *As obedient children*, ſaith St. Peter, *not faſhioning yourſelves according to the former luſts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation;* and, *That*, ſaith St. Paul, *ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God without rebuke*, (or irreprehenſible ſons of

John viii. 39, 44.

Eph. v. 1.

1 Pet. i. 14.

Phil. ii. 15.

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God,) *in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation;* and, *Beloved, now are we the sons of God,* saith St. John, subjoining—*and every one that hath this hope* (a hope grounded upon, or springing from, such a relation) *purifieth himself,* as *God is pure:* God is perfectly just and righteous, thence we likewise should labour to be such; for, *Every one,* saith St. John, *that doeth righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous:* God is perfect in all goodness; so must we endeavour to be, as our Saviour enjoineth us; *Be ye,* saith he, *therefore perfect, as your Father is perfect:* God is bountiful, gracious, and merciful unto all; we thence should learn to be so also; *I say unto you,* (they are our Saviour's lessons to us,) *Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust:* and again; *Love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest; for he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil; be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.* So are we admonished by the holy writers of our engagements to be good on this account. And reason indeed sheweth this relation to be inconsistent with our being otherwise; for similitude only can preserve cognation; things very unlike become formally different in kind and nature thereby; diversity of manners signify a difference in blood: if therefore we be closely affixed to material things, or pronely addicted to brutish pleasures, how can we be the children of him, that is purely spiritual, altogether intellectual? If we be fierce, hardhearted, unmerciful, or uncharitable, how can we claim kindred with him, who is all love and benignity, all munificence and mercy? there can be no affinity in relation, where there is such a dissimilitude in nature: God also cannot deal with us as children, cannot affect or like us, if we do not resemble him; he can only love good men, and the most certain κριτήριον (the most perfect rule, the most evident mark) by

1 John iii. 2, 3.

1 John iii. 7.

Matt. v. 48.

Matt. v. 44.

Luke vi. 35.

Τὸ ὅμοιον ὁμοίῳ φύσει συγγενές ἐστι. *Plat. Protag.*

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extremely fond are we if we be raiſed in our conceit, or are ambitious of reputation, upon the ſcore of any ſuch things? for, *Who*, as the Apoſtle invincibly diſcourſeth, *made thee to differ? what haſt thou that thou didſt not receive? and if thou haſt received it, why doſt thou glory, as if thou hadſt not received it?* To him alone, who is the Author and Donor of all good things; to the Fountain of all power, all joy, all bleſſings; to *the Father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift deſcendeth;* all praiſe and glory is due.

1 Cor. iv. 7.

Jam. i. 17. John iii. 27. 1 Chron. xxix. 14, 15.

5. This conſideration ſheweth us the reaſon we have to ſubmit entirely to the providence of God, with contentedneſs and acquieſcence in every condition: for ſeeing we are *God's poſſeſſions*, (Θεοῦ κτήματα, as Plato calleth us,) he having made us whatever we are, according to all accounts and capacities, whether as men by his common providence, or as Chriſtians by his eſpecial grace; he ſurely hath the beſt right and title that can be upon us; he may juſtly diſpoſe of us and uſe us as he thinks good; we may well thence be obliged, according to the apoſtolical precept, *to glorify God in our body, and in our ſpirit, which are God's;* if we repine at or complain of God's dealing with us, may he not juſtly return to us that anſwer in the Goſpel, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* Shall we not ſuffer God to order his own family according to his diſcretion and pleaſure; to aſſign what ſtation, to allow what portion he pleaſeth to his own children, without our offence or diſpleaſure? Shall we pretend to know better than he what is fit to be done? ſhall we claim a right to diſpenſe his goods, or deſire to be carvers for ourſelves? If it be unjuſt and unreaſonable to do thus, then in all reaſon we ought to be content in every ſtate that he diſpoſeth us into, and to undergo patiently whatever he impoſeth on us; yea we have reaſon to be more than content with every thing incident, not only as juſtly proceeding from him, but as preſumable to be good and convenient for us; for is it not fit that we ſhould think that God will order things for the beſt good of his own children? Can we conceive that he

Plat. in Phæd.

1 Cor vi. 20.

Matt. xx. 15.

willingly will hurt, or will not rather help them; that he will design them any mischief, yea that he will easily suffer it? *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may,* God telleth us, *forget; yet he will not forget us:* sooner indeed may the most tender parents become unnaturally regardless, spiteful, and cruel toward their children, than the immutable God (who in his nature is unexpressibly benign and compassionate) shall neglect the good of his offspring: good reason therefore have we to be satisfied with all that befalleth us. Is. xlix. 15.

6. Particularly this consideration obligeth us to be patient and cheerful in the sorest afflictions, as deeming them to come from a paternal hand, inflicted with great affection and compassion, designed for, and tending to, our good: *Thou shalt,* saith God to the Israelites, *consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee:* and, *We,* saith the Apostle, *have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.* The punishments inflicted on us by men may perhaps proceed from passion; but God assuredly never inflicts any thing grievous on us, but out of pure good-will: and what sweeter consolation can there be, than to know, that the most cross and distasteful accidents befalling us do (according to the intention of him that bringeth them on us, and manageth them) conduce to our profit, and shall in the event, if we do patiently receive them, and by our untowardness do not hinder their effect, prove wholesome and advantageous to us? Deut. viii. 5. Heb. xii. 9, 10.

7. This consideration doth also shew the reason we have to obey those precepts, which enjoin us to rely upon God's providence; *to cast all our burden and care upon God; to be solicitous* and anxious about nothing which concerneth our sustenance: for children commonly (especially such as have able and kind parents) do live altoge- Matt. vi. 25. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 7. Ps. xxxvii. 5. lv. 23.

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ther void of care concerning their maintenance, being assured that their parents will concern themselves to provide whatever is necessary or convenient for them: and how much more have we reason to live free of solicitude in such respects, who have a Father so infinitely sufficient to supply all our wants, and so tenderly affected toward us; so ever present with us, and always vigilant over us; who cannot but see and know our needs; and can most easily satisfy them, and is no less willing and ready, if we trust in him, to do it? *Do not*, saith our Lord, *take care, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?—for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* The like reason did even natural light suggest to a philosopher: *If*, saith he, *kindred with Cæsar, or with any other great man in Rome, is sufficient to make a man live securely, without contempt, and without fear, will not the having God our Maker and Father and Guardian, free us from griefs and fears?* It is extreme infidelity concerning either the providence of God, or his power, or his goodness, (that is, the practical disbelief of this point, or in our hearts disavowing God to be our Father,) which causeth all that carking and distraction of mind, that fear of wants, that grief for losses and disappointments, which do commonly possess men, together with those covetous desires and unjust practices, with which the world aboundeth: he can hardly be guilty of them, who believeth and considereth, that God doth thus stand related and affected toward him.

Matt. vi. 31, 32.

Epict. Arr. i. 9.

8. This consideration doth more generally in all regards serve to breed and cherish our faith, to raise our hope, to quicken our devotion: for whom shall we confide in, if not in such a Father? from whom can we expect good, if not from him, who hath already given us so much, even all that we have? to whom can we have recourse freely and cheerfully, upon any occasion, if not to him, who so kindly inviteth and calleth us to him, in so endearing terms, with so obliging an appellation? If we in any need, corporal or spiritual, request succour or supply from him, can we suspect that such a Father (so infinitely wise, so

ble, ſo good) will refuſe us, or can fail us? No; *What man is there of us, that if his ſon aſk him bread, will give him a ſtone? or if he aſk a fiſh, will give him a ſerpent? If we then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more ſhall your Father in heaven give good things to them that aſk him?* So doth our Saviour with moſt convincing force of reaſon move us to the duty of prayer, with faith and confidence of good ſucceſs. St. Luke hath it, *How much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that aſk him?* implying, that, upon account of this relation, we may in all our ſpiritual needs (if we do need light and direction in our doubts, or ſtrength againſt temptations, or comfort in our diſtreſſes) be aſſured of finding requiſite aſſiſtance and relief. We ſhould therefore, upon all exigencies, addreſs ourſelves to God, not with the fear of ſlaves, nor with the ſuſpicion of ſtrangers, but with diſpoſitions of heart ſuitable to children, with a reverent love, and humble confidence, and cheerful hope.

Matt. vii. 9, 10, 11.

Luke xi. 13.

9. Laſtly, conſidering this point will direct and prompt us how to behave ourſelves towards all God's creatures, according to their reſpective natures and capacities: if God be the father of all things, they are all thence in ſome ſort our brethren, and ſo may claim from us a fraternal affection and demeanor anſwerable thereto. Shall we then ſcorn, abuſe, trample or tyrannize over any of them? doth it become us to do ſo? will our common Father like it, or endure it? If we are all branches ſprouting from one ſtock, or ſtreams iſſuing from the ſame ſource of Divine beneficence and fecundity; if we are members of one body, of one commonwealth, of one family, we are then ſurely obliged to an univerſal benevolence; to be kind and compaſſionate, to be helpful and beneficial unto all, ſo far as our capacity reacheth; we are to endeavour, as we can, to preſerve the order and promote the welfare of the world, and of all things in it: even upon this ſcore the meaneſt of God's creatures is not to be deſpiſed, the vileſt worm is not to be miſuſed by us; ſince even it is the work of his hands, and the ſubject of his care, yea the

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object of his kindness, *who*, as the Psalmist telleth us, *is good unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works*: but especially toward those beings, who according to a more peculiar and excellent sense are entitled the sons of our Father, and to whom we are more nearly allied by our better part, [d] (that Divine breath, which both they and we drew from God,) toward all intellectual beings, we do learn hence our respective duties: of love and respect toward those our elder brethren, the angels, (those of them, which have not degenerated from their nature, and apostatized from their duty;) of charity and good-will toward each other; [e] which if we do not maintain, we may consider that we thereby are first undutiful and unkind to God our common Father, and then even to ourselves; we do hate and harm both God's relations and our own (God's children, and our brethren) by hating or harming any man whatever; especially any good man, any Christian brother; who by other more peculiar bands is straitly tied to us; who upon so many better and higher accounts standeth related unto God, and to ourselves [f]. Aristotle saith, that all men, upon grounds of natural cognation and similitude, are naturally friends to one another [g]; much more are all good men so by participation of a more excellent nature, and by a nobler resemblance; whence it is St. Paul's precept to Christians, that they should be τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ, εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι, that they should *bear a natural affection each to other in brotherly love*: Christians are in a more peculiar and eminent manner styled brethren; and that charity, which in respect to others is called *philanthropy*, (or humanity,) in regard to them is named *philadelphy*, (or brotherly affection:) hence to perform all fraternal offices toward every Christian, to wish

Ps. cxiv. 9, 16.

Rom. xii. 10.

[d] Συγγενὴς πᾶν τὸ λογικόν. *Ant.* iii. 4.

Συγγενὴς, οὐχὶ αἵματος, καὶ σπέρματος τοῦ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ νοῦ, καὶ θείας ἀπορροίας μέτοχος. *Ant.* ii. 1.

[e] Si ab uno Deo inspirati omnes, et animati sumus, quid aliud quam fratres sumus, et quidem conjunctiores quod animis, quam qui corporibus: ergo pro bellua immanibus habendi sunt, qui hominibus nocent. *Lact.* v. 6.

[f] Ἀνθρώποιοι, ὅν ἀνάγκη τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ εν, ὃς ἔχει Δία πρόγονον. *Epict. Arr.* i. 13.

[g] Οἰκεῖον ἅπας ἀνθρώπῳ ἀνθρώπῳ, καὶ φίλον. *Arist. Eth.* viii. 1.

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and earneſtly to promote his good, to com-
: and, as we are able, to relieve his evils, to
infirmities, and to comport with unkindneſſes
, and the like duties, are incumbent on us, as pe-
our profeſſion.

are the principal uſes which the conſideration of
t ſuggeſteth. Now God Almighty, the great
all things, and eſpecially our gracious Father in
us, grant that by his holy grace we may perform
duty toward him, (rendering unto him all love
ence, all praiſe and thanks, all worſhip and obe-
gether with all faith and hope in him,) that we
ve ourſelves in all things as becometh this rela-
we may reſemble him in all goodneſs, that we
iſt here continually in his favour, and obtain
the bleſſed inheritance from him; this he of infi-
y vouchſafe unto us, through Jeſus Chriſt our
whom for ever be all glory and praiſe. *Amen.*

*God the Father, the Creator, Preſerver, and Go-
all things, the Author and Donor of all good; to
on, the Redeemer of all the world, and foundation
itual bleſſings; to God the Holy Ghoſt, the foun-
l true goodneſs, joy, and comfort, be for ever and
lory and praiſe.* Amen.

The Father Almighty.

SERMON XI.

Rev. xi. 17.

O Lord God Almighty.

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EVERY attribute of God is a proper and useful object of our consideration; as being apt to mind us of our duty, and to excite us to the practice thereof; to beget in us those dispositions of mind (that love and reverence toward God, that faith and hope in him) which we ought to have; and to draw from us real performances of obedience to him: each of them doth ground obligations to piety, and yieldeth arguments to the practice thereof; to which purposes, that considering this divine attribute, *Almighty*, (mentioned in our text,) doth much avail, and that it therefore well deserveth to be pressed upon us, will appear more distinctly from the application we shall make thereof: at present we may perceive how considerable it is, by observing in gross; 1. That it is frequently in holy Scripture singled forth, as most proper to God; as most fully expressive of his glorious excellency and majesty; particularly the most illuminate ministers of God's praise, the seraphims in Isaiah, the four wights (or living creatures) in this book; and the twenty-four elders in this place, do therefore use it. 2. It is that attribute, which is alone most expressly set down in our Creed, as especially necessary to be believed and considered: we say therein, **I believe in God the Father Almighty.** 3. It is that

Isa. vi. 3.
Rev. iv. 8.

ith which we daily addreſs our devotions unto God; in ır prayers we ſay, *Almighty and moſt merciful Father;* in ır praiſes we cry, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,* r (which is the ſame) *Lord God of Sabaoth.* It ſeems ıerefore fit and uſeful, that we ſhould well underſtand the roper and full meaning thereof, together with the obli- ations grounded thereon, and the inducements it afford- th to good practice; that ſo when we hear it uſed in ıcripture, when we profeſs to believe it, when we apply it o God in our devotions, we may ſo reflect thereupon, as o be admoniſhed of our duty, and moved to the perform- ınce thereof. Firſt therefore I will endeavour ſomewhat o explain it; then ſhall make a practical application hereof.

The title, epithet, or attribute παντοκράτωρ, which we finding no other word more properly and fully to expreſs t) do render *Almighty*, or omnipotent, is frequently in a nanner peculiar and characteriſtical aſcribed to God: the ıſe thereof in the New Teſtament is, by citation or imita- ion, transferred from the Greek of the Old, where it erveth to expreſs thoſe two famous and uſual names of ɔod, *Sabaoth* and *Shaddai:* eſpecially it anſwereth to the ormer; for the latter is only rendered thereby in ſome laces of the book of Job: but the former, *Sabaoth,* when interpreted and not left in its own ſound,) is con- ıntly rendered παντοκράτωρ. I call *Sabaoth* a name of God; or that it is ſo, it is in ſeveral places expreſsly affirmed; as ı Jeremiah; *Their Redeemer is ſtrong, Jehovah Sabaoth is is name:* and in Iſaiah; *For they call themſelves of the oly city, and ſtay themſelves upon the God of Iſrael; the ord of hoſts is his name:* and in Amos; *He that formeth ie mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto an what is his thought—Jehovah Elohei Sabaoth is his ame,* (from a ſort of Jove, called Ζεὺς Ζαββάσιος, men- oned in ſome Pagan writers, was, as ſome critics ſuppoſe, ɔduced.) Now as all the names and appellations of God e ſignificant, and denote ſome perfection, or ſome prero- ıtive belonging to him, (as *Jehovah* ſignifieth his ſelf- bſiſtence, independency, immutability, and eternity; *Elo-*

Ὅλβιοι ἀνέρες, οἵς Σαβαὼθ νόον ἰσθλὸν ἔδωκεν. *Verſ. Sibyll.* lib. 1.

Jer. l. 34.

Iſa. xlviii. 2.

Amos iv. 13.

Cicero, Ariſtoph. &c. Seld. de Diis S. cap. 3.

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him his omnipotence; *Shaddai* his all-ſufficiency; *Adonai* his ſupreme dominion and authority,) ſo doth this name or title, *Sabaoth*, primitively ſeem to import God's univerſal conduct and managery of all creatures: for all things in the world, as being ranged in a goodly and convenient order, (like an army marching in array, or marſhalled to battle,) are called armies, or *Sabaoth*. Thus, (after the hiſtory of the creation it is ſaid,) *The heavens and earth were finiſhed, and all the hoſt of them*, (πᾶς κόσμος αὐτῶν, all the furniture, or all the battalion of them:) and, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *and all the hoſt of them*: and, *Bleſs the Lord all ye his hoſts, ye miniſters of his, that do his pleaſure*; that is, all creatures which are ſubject to his command, and ſubſervient to his will: and, *Lift up*, ſaith Iſaiah, *your eyes on high, and behold who hath created theſe things; that bringeth out their hoſt by number: he calleth them all by names, by the greatneſs of his might, for that he is ſtrong in power; not one faileth*: where God is repreſented to us as the general of an army, drawing forth and ordering his creatures, as a general ſummoneth to a rendezvous, muſtereth and embattleth his troops: hence this title of *Sabaoth*, which is rendered παντοκράτωρ, doth ſeem derived.

Gen. ii. 1.

Pſal. xxxiii. 6.

Pſ. ciii. 21.

Iſa. xl. 26.

But we need not deal ſo ſtrictly, as to limit the ſenſe of this word, according to its original riſe, or its uſe in tranſlation; but ſince it hath been authenticated by its uſe in the holy fountains of truth, the New Teſtament, and is there uſed ſo as to ſignify or imply the ſum of Divine perfections and preeminencies; being, as it ſeems, ſelected eſpecially for that purpoſe, we may preſume to take it in its common latitude, for ὁ πάντων κρατῶν, or ὁ πάντων κράτος ἔχων; according to which extent, it may have various importances, ſomewhat different; it may accordingly denote, 1. right, or authority, over all beings, *omni-poteſtas*; and, 2. a power, or ability, to do all things, *omni-potentia*: 3. the actual exerciſe of ſuch authority, and ſuch power in ruling and diſpoſing all things; *omni-potentatus*: 4. the poſſeſſion of all things; or the containing and holding all

things in his hand; *omni-tenentia*, (it is St. Auguſtine's word:) 5. the preſervation or upholding of all things in their being and ſtate: for the word κρατῶν, according to its propriety and ordinary uſe, may infer and ground all theſe ſignifications; and according to them all, God is truly παντοκράτωρ. Let us ſurvey the particulars, and ſhew how God, eſpecially in holy Scripture, is repreſented in reſpect to them. SERM. XI.

1. God is παντοκράτωρ, as having a juſt right and authority over all things; he naturally is the ſovereign Lord and Emperor of the world; for whatever imaginable reaſon or ground there is of authority, doth in reſpect to all things agree unto God. Ariſtotle, in his Politics, diſcourſeth thus: Government doth aim at and tend to the mutual benefit of the governor and governed; he therefore who is moſt able and beſt diſpoſed to provide for and procure the common benefit, is according to natural reaſon and juſtice (ſecluding other conſiderations of laws and compacts, of former conſtitutions, of preſent poſſeſſion, and the like) to be the governor; or he deſerves, and is fit to be ſo, and (no other reaſon hindering) becometh ſuch, (*That*, ſaith the Philoſopher, *which naturally is apt or able to provide, doth naturally rule, and naturally lordeth*:) whence the ſoul hath a right to govern the body; and men naturally do rule over beaſts; and were there any ſuch perſons, as did without any queſtion very eminently exceed others in wiſdom and goodneſs, to them, according to natural congruity, the government of others would appertain; the common advantage ſo requiring: and if ſuch excellency of nature be a foundation of authority, then God, who in wiſdom and goodneſs doth incomparably ſurpaſs all things, hath aſſuredly the right to govern all: ſo a Pagan author could diſcourſe; *There is*, ſaith Cicero, *nothing better than God; therefore it is neceſſary the world ſhould be ruled by him*[a]: he is the *only wiſe*, (as St. Paul telleth us,) and thence moſt able; he is

1 Tim. vi. 6.

Τὸ δυνάμενον φύσει προεστῆν, ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει.

Rom. xvi. 17. Luke xviii. 19.

[a] Nihil eſt præſtantius Deo; ab eo igitur neceſſe eſt mundum regi. *Cic. de N. D.* 2.

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only good, (as our Saviour teacheth us,) and thence most apt to manage all things for the general welfare and benefit of the world. If alſo eminency of power doth qualify for dominion, (as it ſurely doth; for that which cannot be withſtood muſt in reaſon be ſubmitted to; it is vain to queſtion that authority, which by force altogether irreſiſtible can aſſert and maintain itſelf,) God hath the only right, nothing in the world being able to conteſt his title; for, *Who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the ſons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of hoſts, who is a ſtrong Lord like unto thee?* ſays the holy Pſalmiſt contemplating this Divine attribute: all things are weak and feeble in compariſon; are altogether in his hand, and under his feet; are throughly at his diſcretion and diſpoſal: *The Lord*, ſaith the Prophet, *is the true God, and the everlaſting King; at his wrath the earth ſhall tremble, and the nations ſhall not be able to abide his indignation:* and, *How terrible*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *art thou in thy works! through the greatneſs of thy power ſhall thine enemies ſubmit themſelves unto thee—He ruleth by his power for ever, his eyes behold the nations; let not the rebellious exalt themſelves.*

Pſ. lxxxix. 6, 8.

Jer. x. 10.

Pſ. lxvi. 3, 7.

If alſo to have made all things, and to preſerve them, doth create a right of governing, (as it muſt needs do ſo; for what can we juſtly challenge a dominion over, if not over our own works, over that which we continually keep and nouriſh; over that which altogether depends upon us, and which ſubſiſts at our pleaſure?) then well may the Apocalyptical elders thus acknowledge; *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power*, (that is, to poſſeſs the royal majeſty and ſovereign dominion over the world;) *for thou haſt made all things, and for thy will they are, and were created:* well might *every creature that is in the heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and thoſe things which are in the ſea, and all things in them cry out there; To him that ſitteth upon the throne (and to the Lamb) be the bleſſing, and the honour, and the glory, and* * *the dominion for ever and ever:* well might king Hezekiah ſay, *O Lord of hoſts—thou art the God*

Rev. iv. 11.

Rev. v. 13.

τὸ κράτος.

Iſ. xxxvii. 16.

hou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou haſt made SERM. XI.
eaven and earth: and the Levites in Nehemiah; *Thou, Neh. ix. 6.*
en thou, art the Lord alone; thou haſt made heaven and earth; the heaven of heavens, with all their hoſts; the earth, and all things that are therein; the ſea, and all that is therein; and thou preſerveſt them all; and all the hoſt of heaven worſhippeth thee. Thus is God παντοκράτωρ; as he is upon all imaginable accounts, and according to all reaſonable grounds of right, the rightful Sovereign of all things; as he is *Divûmque hominûmque poteſtas,* as the wiſeſt Poet doth acknowledge and ſtyle him. Virg. Æn. 10.

2. He is alſo ſuch in regard to his infinite power, as that word may ſignify omnipotent. Natural light affordeth pregnant arguments of the greatneſs of his power, diſplayed in the conſtitution and conſervation of the world; his diſpoſing ſo ſtupendouſly vaſt, ſo unconceivably various creatures into ſo comely and ſtable a poſture, whence *his eternal power and divinity are diſcerned,* as St. Paul telleth us; for he that could effect ſo much, his power muſt needs be far greater than we can imagine or comprehend: to natural light, I ſay, it is incomprehenſibly great, and exceedeth all definite limits; but holy Scripture more clearly and fully declareth the extent of his power; aſſerting, that it is not only in reſpect to our weak conceit and narrow capacity, but in itſelf truly infinite, reaching the utmoſt poſſibility of things: it teacheth us, that whatever is not contrary to his nature, or to his eſſential perfections, (to his goodneſs, fidelity, holineſs, wiſdom;) which it doth not miſbecome him to do; or which is not repugnant to the nature of things to be done, (that is, which doth not imply a contradiction, and thereby is impoſſible, and becomes no object of power;) for ſuch things *he cannot do, becauſe he is omnipotent;* as St. Auſtin acutely ſays; he is able with perfect eaſe and facility to achieve it: there is among things good and poſſible nothing ſo difficult, but he can perform it; nothing ſo ſtrong or ſtubborn, but he can ſubdue it: *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* ſaid God to Abraham, when Sarah doubted, or wondered concerning the promiſe, that ſhe in Rom i. 20. Deus propterea quædam non poteſt, quia omnipotens eſt. *Aug. de Civ. D.* v. 10. Gen. xviii. 14.

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ſo extreme an age ſhould become fruitful: *Behold,* ſaid the Prophet Jeremiah in his prayer, *thou haſt made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and thy ſtretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:* ὐκ ἀδυνατήσει Θεῷ πᾶν ῥῆμα· *Nothing* (that can be ſaid, or conceived, or performed) *ſhall be impoſſible to God,* if he pleaſeth to deſign or undertake it, ſaid the angel to the bleſſed Virgin, when he delivered ſo ſtrange a meſſage to her concerning an event ſo wonderful and ſupernatural, as our Saviour's conception of her: that a rich man ſhould be induced entirely to comply with God's will, and willingly to part with all, our Saviour affirmed exceedingly difficult, (hardly any thing could be ſuppoſed more difficult; harder it was, than *for a camel to paſs through the eye of a needle*;) but to ſatisfy his Diſciples' ſcruple thence ariſing, he ſubjoins; *With men* (or according to the common ſenſe of men) *this is impoſſible, but to God all things are poſſible: In thine hand,* ſaid king Jehoſhaphat, *there is power, and might, ſo that none is able to withſtand thee:* and king Nebuchadnezzar having felt an experiment of his power, and being returned to a right underſtanding, confeſſeth thus; *He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, What doeſt thou? The Lord of hoſts,* ſaith the Prophet, *hath purpoſed, and who ſhall diſannul it? his hand is ſtretched out, and who ſhall turn it back?* To ſtop the ſun in his career, to make the ſea ſtand upon an heap, to draw ſtreams of water from a rock, to reſtrain fire from burning, to reſtore the blind and lame, to raiſe the dead, to ſuſpend, thwart, invert the courſe of nature, with all ſuch things which we ſo wonder at, and term miracles, are comparatively but ſlender, and, as it were, perfunctory inſtances of his power; for with the greateſt eaſe, by the leaſt exertion of his power, by a thought, a look, a touch, a word, the greateſt things are performed: *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they ſmoke: He overturneth the mountains in his anger, and ſhaketh the earth out of her place: The pillars of heaven tremble, and*

Jer. xxxii. 17, 27.
Luke i. 37.
Matt. xix. 26.
2 Chr. xx. 6.
Dan. iv. 35.
Iſ. xiv. 27.
Pſal. xviii. 7, 8.
Job ix. 5.
xxvi. 11.

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are astonished at his reproof. These seem great and strange effects of power; yet in respect to what he can do, and hath done, they are small; for he at first made the whole world with a word; so the history of the creation expresseth it, and so the Psalmist telleth us; *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth*; and by a word he doth preserve it, *upholding*, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, *all things by the word of his power*, or by his powerful word; and by a word he can destroy and annihilate all things; yea more easily, in a manner, he can do it, even by his mere silence, or by withdrawing that salutary breath, by virtue of which all things subsist; *Thou hidest thy face*, saith the Psalmist, *they are troubled; thou withholdest thy breath, they die and return to their dust.* For we may consider, that in this respect also God is all-powerful, as being the source from which all power is derived, by which all power is sustained, upon which all power doth depend; he not only can do all things inclusively, but exclusively, or so that nothing can be done without him: that of our Saviour, *Without me ye can do nothing*, is not only true in spiritual, but in all other matters: *He*, as St. Paul preached at Athens, *giveth life* (or being, with all vital faculties) *and breath*, (that is, all natural powers) *and all things unto all: In him* (or rather, by him) *we live, and move, and have our being;* that is, whatever we are, whatever we have, whatever we can do, doth proceed from him, doth depend upon him. Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, as all-powerful.

Psal. xxxiii. 6, 9.

Heb. i. 3.

Ps. civ. 28. Job xxxiv. 14, 20.

John xv. 5.

Acts xvii. 24, 28.

3. God is also so, by reason that he doth actually exercise all dominion, and doth exert his power continually, according to his good pleasure: he not only hath a just title to govern all things, and a perfect ability to sway in all matters, but he constantly useth them: *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all: God is the King of all the earth; God reigneth over the heathen*, (or the nations;) *God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness: The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens: Who is like unto the*

Psal. ciii. 19.

Psal. xlvii. 7, 8.

Psal. cxiii. 4.

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Lord our God, who humbleth himſelf to behold the thing that are in heaven and earth? It is indeed, as the holy man ſaith, a great condeſcenſion in God, that he will vouchſafe to have the inſpection and adminiſtration of things ſo much inferior to him; yet for the common good of his creatures he is pleaſed to do it: *Thine*, ſaith king David, *O Lord, is the kingdom, and thou art exalted as head above all; both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reigneſt over all; in thine hand is power and might*, &c. He is indeed the only Governor, abſolutely, originally, and independently ſo; ὁ μόνος δυνάστης, *the only Potentate*, as St. Paul calleth him; all authority and power are imparted by him, and ſubordinate to him; from his diſpoſal and direction all potentates do receive them; in his name and behalf, by virtue of his commiſſion and command, as his delegates and miniſters, for his honour, intereſt, and ſervice, they adminiſter any juſt dominion or power. It was Nebuchadnezzar's doom to be driven from men, until he did underſtand and embrace this truth, ſo neceſſary for all governors to know and conſider; that, *The Moſt High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomſoever he will;* that, *His kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom, and all dominions ſhall ſerve and obey him: Promotion cometh neither from the eaſt, nor from the weſt, nor from the ſouth: but God is the Judge; he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another: There is no power but from God; the powers that are, are appointed by God: The judgment is God's*, (as Moſes ſaid in his charge to the judges of Iſrael,) being exerciſed by his order, and in his behalf. Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, *as the only abſolute* ſovereign Lord, the Author and Fountain of all juſt authority, *the Lord of lords, and King of kings*, as the Scripture often doth ſtyle him.

1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12.

1 Tim. vi. 15.

Dan. iv. 25. ii. 21. vii. 27.

Pſal. lxxv. 6, 7.

Rom. xiii. 1.

John xix. 11.

Rev. xix. 16.

Deut. x. 17.

Pſ. cxxxvi. 3.

4. God is alſo παντοκράτωρ, as the true proprietary and juſt poſſeſſor of all things. *Bleſſed be Abraham*, ſaid king Melchizedek, *of the moſt high God, poſſeſſor of heaven and earth*: and, *Behold*, ſaid Moſes to his people, *the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God; the earth alſo, with all that is therein*: and, *The earth*, ſaith the

Gen. xiv. 19.

Deut. x. 14.

Pſal. xxiv. 1. l. 12.

Pſalmiſt, *is the Lord's, and the fulneſs thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; for he hath founded it upon the ſeas, and prepared it upon the floods:* and, *The heavens,* ſaith he again, *are thine, the earth alſo is thine; as for the world, and the fulneſs thereof,* (that is, all which the world contains, all with which it is furniſhed and repleniſhed,) *thou haſt founded them:* and, *The ſea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land.* All things, they ſay, are the goods and poſſeſſions of God; proving it from hence, that he made them, and thereby acquired a propriety in them: for there is no more evident and perfect ground of propriety than this. The products of our invention and care, the fruits of our endeavour and induſtry, even we do think that reaſonably we may call our own, and juſtly claim the enjoyment of: how much more he, that by an original, uncommunicated, independent wiſdom and power, hath contrived and produced all things! From thence ſurely doth reſult ſuch a title to them all, that the entire and abſolute diſpoſal of them doth appertain to him; ſo that he may apply them, as the potter doth the veſſels which he maketh, (it is the Scripture compariſon,) to what uſe he thinketh good; that he may freely place and beſtow them where he pleaſeth; that he may take them away, or transfer them, when he ſeeth fit: they can never be ſo alienated from him, that the enjoyment of them doth not wholly depend on him, and that at pleaſure (his wiſdom and goodneſs permitting, his truth and word being ſolved) he may not reſume them to himſelf.

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Pſ. lxxxix. 11.

Pſ. xcv. 5.

Iſa. xlv. 9. lxiv. 8. x. 15. Jer. xviii. 6. Rom. ix. 21.

5. God is alſo παντοκράτωρ, as containing and comprehending all things by his immenſe preſence and infinite capacity: it is a name which the Jewiſh doctors commonly apply to God, *hamakom*, the place, becauſe all things do ſubſiſt in him; he being, as St. Hierome ſpeaks, *infuſed through all things, and circumfuſed about all things; ſo as to penetrate them within, and to contain them without;* ſo as to be *within all things not included, and without all things not excluded:* and, *We do not,* ſaith Mi-

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nutius Felix, *only live in the eye, but in the bosom of God*[b]. The whole world, how vast soever it seemeth to our narrow conceit, is but as a drop, or as an atom of dust, in his hand: *Behold*, saith the Prophet elegantly and truly, *the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing; all nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity*: and, *I fill heaven and earth*, saith God in Jeremiah: and king Solomon in his prayer saith more; *Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee*: and, *Whither*, saith the Psalmist, *shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there: if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*

Isa. xl. 15, 17. xlviii. 13. xl. 12.

Jer. xxiii. 24.

1 Kings viii. 27.

Ps. cxxxix. 7, &c.

6. Lastly, God is παντοκράτωρ in regard that he sustains and preserves all things. *When*, saith St. Gregory Nyssen, *we hear the word παντοκράτωρ, we understand this, that God containeth all things in being*[c]: *Thou*, say the Levites in Nehemiah, *even thou, art God alone; thou hast made heaven and earth, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth, and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*

Col. i. 17.

Heb. i. 3.

Neh. ix. 6.

In all these respects and senses doth the title παντοκράτωρ (which we for want of a word more adequate and expressive, do render *Almighty*) belong to God: the Greek word, in the latitude of its signification, according to its etymology, comprehendeth all these senses, and the design in its use, as we before touched, warranteth the tak-

[b] In omnibus infusus, et circumfusus, ut cuncta penetret interior, et contineat exterior. *Hier. ad Marcell.* 5.

Intra omnia nec inclusus, extra omnia nec exclusus.

Non solum in oculis Dei, sed in sinu vivimus. *Minut. F.*

Solus est omnia; opus suum et extra, et intra tenet. *Sen. Præf. Nat. Q.*

[c] Ὅταν τῆς παντοκράτορος φωνῆς ἀκούομεν, τοῦτο νοοῦμεν, τὰ πάντα τὸν Θεὸν ἐν τῷ εἶναι συνέχειν. *Greg. Nyss.*

ing it in the largeſt acception; but however it certainly reſpecteth the former ſenſes, denoting the abſolute univerſal ſovereignty and the immenſe irreſiſtible power of God: the belief and conſideration of which particulars is of great importance, and may have a very uſeful influence upon our practice: for,

I. If God be the juſt Sovereign of all things, having a right to govern the world, and actually exerciſing it; then,

1. We ſee our condition and ſtate here in this world. We live not in an anarchy, or in perfect liberty; we are not our own maſters, or have a right to guide our actions according to our own will, or after our own fancy; but are under government; a government moſt abſolute and arbitrary; the laws whereof we may not diſpute, the proceedings whereof we cannot reſiſt. Whence,

Τραχὺς μόναρχος, καὶ οὐκ ἀνάδυνος κρατεῖ. *Æſch.*

2. We underſtand our duty; that as ſubjects and vaſſals we are obliged to render all awful reverence, worſhip, and obedience to God; humbly to adore the majeſty, readily to perform the commands, and patiently to ſubmit to the will of our great Sovereign; to conform all our actions to that heavenly law, under which we are born and live in the world. *We do not*, even Plutarch could tell us, *come hither into life to make laws, but to obey thoſe which are appointed by God, who ordereth all things; to obſerve the decrees of Deſtiny and Providence*[d].

3. Hence we may diſcern the heinouſneſs of every ſin, or tranſgreſſion of God's law; it receiving great aggravation hence. It hence appeareth not only a matter of ſimple folly, or private inconvenience, (contrary to our reaſon,) but of public miſchief and general ill conſequence; being committed againſt the crown and dignity of God Almighty; againſt the peace and order of the world; which ſubſiſt by the obſervation of his laws. Every ſin is an act of high rebellion, a breach of our natural allegiance, *a liſting up ourſelves*, as is ſaid of Belſhazzar, *againſt*

Num. xv. 30.
Dan. v. 20.

[d] Οὐ γὰρ νομοθετήσαντες πάρεσμεν εἰς τὸν βίον, ἀλλὰ πειθόμενοι τοῖς διατεταγμένοις ὑπὸ τῶν τὰ ὅλα προστατούντων θεῶν, καὶ τοῖς τῆς εἱμαρμένης, καὶ προνοίας θείας. *Plut. Conſul. ad Apol.*

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our Sovereign; an infringing that right, and violating the honour of his, which he by his place and office is concerned to maintain and vindicate.

4. We may hence learn what reason we have to be content in every condition, and to undergo patiently every event befalling us: for that our station is allotted to us by an unquestionable right, and all things are dispensed to us by a common law, from which nothing can be exempted; for that things come not by a blind necessity or chance, but are disposed and managed by sovereign reason and wisdom. *We must*, saith an Ethnic Philosopher, *not be displeased at any of these things; for we are come into that world, where we must live by these laws: and A good man must needs be granted to be highly pious toward God; he therefore will sustain all accidents with equanimity; as knowing them to happen unto him by a Divine law, by which all things proceed*[e]. It were indeed intolerable arrogance and frowardness in us to desire an exemption from that common law, to which all things are subject; to wish ourselves out of that order, in which the all-guiding Providence hath set us; to be dissatisfied with any thing, which by the Supreme Wisdom is assigned to us: it becometh us to say with old Eli, *It is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good;* to say upon all occasions with David; *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.* Upon this consideration we should not only be satisfied with, and acquiesce in, but praise and adore all occurrences of Providence, how unkindly soever and distasteful they appear to us; supposing a just and reasonable cause to lie under them, although indiscernible to us[f]. Yea farther,

1 Sam. iii. 18.

Psal. xxxix. 9.

5. It is a matter of great consolation to reflect, that we

[e] Nihil horum indignandum est; in cum intravimus mundum, in quo hi legibus vivitur. *Sen. Ep.* 91.

Virum bonum concedas necesse est summæ pietatis erga Deos esse; itaque quicquid illi acciderit, æquo animo sustinebit, scit enim id accidisse lege divina, qua universa procedunt. *Sen. Ep.* 76.

[f] Πάντα θαυμάζειν, πάντα ἐπαινεῖν, πάντα ἀνεξιτάστως ἀποδέχεσθαι τὰ τῆς προνοίας ἔργα, κἂν φαίνεται πολλοῖς ἄδικα, διὰ τὸ ἄγνωστον εἶναι, καὶ ἀπατέλεστα τῷ Θεῷ τὴν πρόνοιαν. *Damasc. de O. F.* ii. 22.

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and all the world are under ſuch a government; it is a common felicity, it is our particular happineſs, that we are ſo; for it is no unjuſt uſurper, it is no mercileſs tyrant, it is no fond, no weak, no careleſs perſon that we are in ſubjection to, but a moſt juſt, moſt mild, moſt gracious, moſt wiſe, moſt powerful, moſt vigilant Lord; who will deal moſt equally and moſt benignly with us; who ſincerely and earneſtly tenders our welfare; who is watchful and careful for our good; who is able to provide for all our needs, and to protect us from all miſchief; all whoſe laws do only aim at our benefit; all whoſe proceedings toward us are full of equity, goodneſs, and truth; who will not only favourably accept, but moſt bountifully recompenſe our obedience; whom to ſerve and obey is a privilege far better and more deſirable for us, than to be free, than to be wholly at our own diſpoſal, and under our own guidance; the very nature and the end of his government being only to preſerve us, and to reſcue us from the errors, the ſlaveries, the vexations and miſeries we are apt to incur; by virtue of whoſe univerſal dominion we are ſecured, that no malice of devil, no unjuſtice of men, no ſort of enemy whatever, (excepting our own wilful diſobedience to his laws and directions,) ſhall be able to do us harm; for all them he governs and he curbs no leſs than ourſelves. Of this our King it is truly ſaid, that *juſtice and judgment are the eſtabliſhment of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face;* that, *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his doings;* that, *The ſceptre of his kingdom is a right ſceptre;* that, *His yoke is eaſy, and his burden light.* In confidence of his protection we may ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *The Lord is my light and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? The Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid? God is our refuge and ſtrength — therefore will I not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea. In God have I put my truſt, I will not fear what fleſh can do unto me.* Well therefore may we, may the whole world, in conſideration of our

Deut. x. 12.

Pſ. lxxxix. 14.
Pſ. cxlv. 17.
Rev. xv. 3.
Pſal. xlv. 6.
Matt. xi. 30.
Pſal. xxvii. 1, 2.
Pſ. xlvi. 1, 2.
Pſ. lvi. 4.

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being under ſo good a Governor, be excited to joy and jubilation with the Pſalmiſt; *O clap your hands, all ye people; ſhout unto God with the voice of triumph: for the Lord moſt high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.* Say among the nations, that the Lord reigneth; the world alſo ſhall be eſtabliſhed, that it ſhall not be moved; he ſhall judge the people righteouſly: let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad, &c. *Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the world, and the people with equity.* Or with thoſe in the Revelation; *Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour unto him.* All the world hath exceeding reaſon not only to be content, but to rejoice and triumph in being ſubject to ſuch a Governor, ſo able, ſo willing to maintain peace, good order, and equity therein: ſo that we alſo are obliged to bleſs and thank God, that he condeſcends ſo far, and vouchſafes to undertake the tuition and overſight of the world; obeying the Pſalmiſt's exhortation; *The Lord,* ſaith he, *hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all:* therefore, *Bleſs the Lord, ye his angels—Bleſs the Lord, all his hoſts—Bleſs the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion;* imitating herein thoſe elders in the Revelation; who ſay, *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and waſt, and art to come; becauſe thou haſt taken unto thee thy great power, and haſt reigned.* They who imagine the world is not governed at all, but that with unlooſed reins it runneth on at random, are very fooliſh: but more ſuch are they, who wiſh it to be ſo, and in their deſires depoſe God from his throne; for they do wiſh for anarchy and confuſion in their country, inſtead of the moſt excellent eſtabliſhment and order, maintained by the wiſeſt and ableſt government. That good emperor was better adviſed, and better affected, who ſaid, *What good were it for me to live in a world void of a Deity, and Providence?* and, *Why ſhould I deſire to continue in ſuch a caſual jumble and rout of*

Pſal. xlvii. 1, 2.
Pſ. xcvi. 10.
Pſ. xcviii. 8.
Rev. xix. 6.
Pſal. ciii. 19.
Rev. xi. 17.

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s? The world, he well ſuppoſed, Divine governance xcluded, would be a ſtrange, diſorderly, and uncom- : place to abide in. And old Socrates, in the *Phæ-* ſcourſing about his departure hence, comforts him- hat, as he hoped, he was going thither, where the did preſide with a nearer inſpection and a more nt influence. Theſe were worthy deſires and noble proceeding from natural reaſon and moral virtue in erſons; but much more reaſon and much greater ion have we to be ſatisfied with, and to comfort es in the aſſurance, that all things, even at preſent, re moderated by a ſuperintendency far more equal ore propitious than they could imagine or hope. and ſuch like practical uſes the belief and conſider- of God's ſovereign authority and dominion do af- the belief and conſideration of God's immenſe and rollable power is alſo of very great importance and ce upon practice.

t ſerveth to beget in us a due awe and dread of conſidering God's other attributes may breed in igh eſteem and hearty love of God; but the conſi- m of his power is that which naturally and reaſon- roduceth a great fear of him: he is moſt amiable goodneſs, and in regard to his wiſdom greatly ve- e; but his power, arming the reſt, renders him ex- gly terrible. *Hear ye this*, it is ſaid in the Prophet Jer. v. 21, 22. iah, *O fooliſh people, and without underſtanding; Fear me? ſaith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my pre- which hath placed the ſand for the bounds of the ſea?* nd, *Foraſmuch as there is none like unto thee, O* Jer. x. 6, 7. *thou art great, and thy name is great in might: who not fear thee, O thou king of nations?* and, *I will ou*, ſaith our Saviour, *whom ye ſhould fear; Fear* Luke xii. 5. *ho after he hath killed* (or who beſide killing) *hath* Μετὰ τὸ ἀ- ποκτεῖναι. *to caſt into hell; I ſay unto you, Fear him:* great

ις ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κενῷ θεῶν, ἢ προνοίας κενῷ; *Ant.* ii. §. 11.
ἐπιθυμῶ εἰκαίῳ συγκρίματι, καὶ φυρμῷ τοιούτῳ ἐνδιατρίβειν; *Idem.* vi.

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reason he had so earnestly to inculcate that admonition the case being so apparent and so important.

2. This point doth consequently in high measure dissuade and deter us from sin, implying the extreme folly in committing it, and the inevitable mischief following it. The consideration of God's other attributes infer it to be great basenes and stupidity to oppose or displease God; but the consideration of this demonstrateth it to be infinite madness to do so. For to wrong, dishonour, and displease him, that is so good and beneficent to us, is great disingenuity and unworthiness; to swerve from his advice and direction, who is only and perfectly wise, is highly vain and unreasonable; but for so feeble and impotent things as we are to contest with and withstand, to provoke and offend Omnipotency, (that which with infinite ease can defeat and subdue us, can depress us into misery, can crush us into nothing,) is most palpably the top of insolent wildness. It is Moses's argument, whereby he presseth obedience to his law; *Circumcise therefore*, saith he, *the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked; for the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, and a mighty, and a terrible.* It is no less an evidently convincing, than a vehemently affecting increpation, that of St. Paul; *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?* And God himself in Job useth the like scheme of speech; *Hast thou an arm like God? and canst thou thunder with a voice like him?* If thou art as strong, if thou hast such an arm, then mayest thou perhaps dare to contend with him, and adventure to provoke him: but if thou nowise art his match, if thou art infinitely short of him in strength, how vain and rash a thing is it for thee to defy him thus, to enter with him into the lists, to strive and grapple with him! to do as the sinner in Job is expressed doing; *He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.* All presumptuous sinning is described and represented in Scripture as a comparing, and in effect preferring, our power and force in regard to the power of God; or as a tempting God, and challenging him to bat

Deut. x. 16, 17.

1 Cor. x. 22.

Job. xl. 9.

Job xv. 25.

de; or as an actual coping, contention, and fighting with him: sinners, as such, are styled the adversaries of God, and rebels against him; such as rise up, and lift up themselves, and raise their hand against him; which doth either imply in them a more than gigantic pride and arrogance, in overvaluing their own power and undervaluing the power of God, (which doth also involve infidelity, and disbelief of God's omnipotence; for he who believeth that, cannot take himself for God's match, or dare to struggle with him;) or it argueth a most strange inconsiderateness and vanity, in presuming, at so infinite a disadvantage, without any ground of confidence, without any hope of success, to oppose God's will and power. Οὐ δηνὸς, ὃς ἀθανάτοισι μάχοιτο: *He is not long lived, who fighteth with the immortals*, old Homer could tell us; the same which the Prophet says; *Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!* Nothing indeed can be more reasonable, than that advice of the Preacher; *Contend not with him that is mightier than thou:* which in this case in effect is the same with this; Do not, by sinning, offend or provoke God.

Isa. xlv. 9. x. 5.

3. Whence likewise the consideration of this point may dispose us to weigh our counsels, and thereupon not to adventure upon any unwarrantable resolution or design; there being so apparent reason to despair of success, an insuperable power being always ready to obstruct and cross us in the carriage of such designs, with whatever cunning laid, or backed with whatever might; for hence those sayings in Scripture are manifestly verified: *There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord:* and, *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper:* and, *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered?*

Isa. xlv. 23. Isa. liv. 17. Job iv. 9. Num. xiv. 41. Psal. lxvi. 3, 7.

4. It also likewise serveth to depress in us all confidence in ourselves, and in all other things, as to any security in them or succour from them: for all things in the world, though they conspire and combine together all their forces, will be altogether unable to support us, to assist us, to defend us against the Divine power, or indeed with-

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out it; they being all, otherwiſe than as maintained by him, infinitely feeble and frail: *Though hand join in hand,* (that is, notwithſtanding the conjunction of all powers whatever,) *the wicked ſhall not be unpuniſhed,* ſaith the Wiſe Man: and, *I kill,* ſaith God, *and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any thing that can deliver out of my hand:* and, *No king is ſaved by the multitude of an hoſt; a mighty man is not delivered by much ſtrength; a horſe is a vain thing for ſafety.*

Prov. xi. 21. xvi. 5. Deut. xxxii. 39. Job x. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 6. Pſal. xxxiii. 16. cxlvi. 3. Iſa. xxxvi. 6.

5. It therefore alſo may be of a ſpecial efficacy to quell and mortify in us the vices of pride, haughtineſs, arrogance, ſelf-will, ſtubbornneſs, and contumacy; ſince contemplating the power of God we cannot but perceive ourſelves to be very pitiful, impotent, and inſignificant things; who without permiſſion cannot effect any thing; who cannot expect in any caſe to have our will; who have continually curbs in our mouths, and manacles on our hands; ſo that we cannot ſay or do any thing, cannot ſo much as ſtir, or endeavour any thing, without check or control; being under a predominant force, *which always reſiſteth the proud;* under the power of him who hath ſaid, *The lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be bowed down;* whoſe character and peculiar work it is to *behold every one that is proud, and to abaſe him; to cauſe the arrogancy of the proud to ceaſe, and to lay low the haughtineſs of the terrible;* to *break the high arm,* and *to bring down the high looks;* and to *ſtain the pride of all glory.* Whence there is all the reaſon in the world that we ſhould obey St. Peter's injunction; to *humble ourſelves under the mighty hand of God.*

Prov. iii. 34. Iſa. ii. 11. xiii. 11. xxiv. 21. x. 2. Job xl. 11, 12. xxxviii. 15. Pſal. xviii. 27. Iſa. xxiii. 9. 1 Pet. v. 6.

6. The conſideration of God's omnipotence ſerveth to breed and nouriſh faith in God, as to the certain performance of his word and promiſes: for let the accompliſhment of them be to appearance never ſo difficult or improbable, yet he is able to perform them, and will therefore do it. *The Strength of Iſrael,* as Samuel ſaid, *will not lie, nor repent:* and, *Hath he ſaid it, and ſhall he not do it? or hath he ſpoken it, and ſhall he not make it good?* ſaid Balaam, inſpiredly: and, *The Lord of hoſts,* ſaith

1 Sam. xv. 29. Num. xxiii. 19. Iſa. xiv. 27.

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Hath, hath purposed it, and who shall disannul it? His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? and, *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I will also do it:* and, *My word that goeth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; it shall prosper unto the thing whereunto I sent it:* and, *The counsel of the Lord,* saith the Psalmist, *standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations: Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him; for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast:* and, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.* So doth God assert his immutable fidelity, and considering his indefectible power doth assure us that we may rely upon his word; and the doing so is very grateful and acceptable to God; for it was that virtue for which Abraham is so highly commended and so richly rewarded: *He did not,* saith St. Paul of him, *staggar at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform:* to do otherwise is very displeasing and offensive to God; for we do thereby either doubt of his veracity, so, as St. John saith, *making him a liar;* or we disbelieve his power, and make him impotent in our conceit; which to do is high injury to God, and detestable sacrilege. Hence also,

Isa. xlvi. 10, 11. Isa. lv. 11. Psal. xxxiii. 11, 9. Isa. xl. 8. Mark xiii. 31. Job xxiii. 13. Prov. xix. 21. Jer. iv. 28. Rom. iv. 20, 21. 1 John v. 10.

7. Particularly this consideration may produce and cherish our faith in the sufficiency of God's providence, and may induce us entirely to rely upon it. For if God be omnipotent, then is he easily able to supply us in all our needs, to relieve us in all our straits, to protect us from all danger and mischief; and being able, he will not fail to do it, since his goodness also disposeth him thereto, and his word engageth him; he having declared himself to be the patron, protector, and benefactor of the needy; he having promised to help, relieve, and comfort those who seek and cry unto him. Distrust in God's providence is always grounded either in the disbelief of God's good-

Psal. cxlv. cxlvi. cxlvii. &c.

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nefs or of his power; either in fuppofing him to be unwilling or unable to do us good; and that is commonly grounded on the latter, the Ifraelites' conftant behaviour in the wilderneefs (reprefenting the ordinary converfation of men in this world) doth inform us; who conceived their needs greater, than that God was able to fupply them; their enemies ftronger, than that by God's affiftance they could withftand or fubdue them; the obftacles to their proceedings fuch, that God himfelf could not carry them through them; for, as the Pfalmift reprefenteth their behaviour and difcourfe, *They fpake againft God, faying, Can God furnifh a table in the wilderneefs? Behold, he fmote the rock, that the waters gufhed out, and the ftreams overflowed; can he give bread alfo? can he provide flefh for his people?* and that from their conceiting God unable to convey them through all dangers and difficulties, to render them victorious over the tall men and the fenced cities of Canaan, they, notwithftanding God's prefence with them, and ready aid, defponded in heart, and murmured, and provoked God, and in confequence of fuch mifbehaviour forfeited obtaining the reft propounded to them, many paffages in the ftory do fhew us. We in practice do commonly follow them, notwithftanding the many experiments of God's wonderful power and goodneefs, frequently fufpecting that God cannot fupply our neceffities or fatisfy our defires; whence we are either overborne with anxiety, and become difconfolate, or have recourfe for fuccour and relief to other aids; deferting God, as the Prophet intimates, when he (withal declaring the offence God taketh at fuch mifcarriages, with the guilt and mifchief we thereby incur) pronounceth thus: *Curfed be the man that trufteth in man, and maketh flefh his arm, and whofe heart departeth from the Lord; for he fhall be like the heath in the defert, and fhall not fee when good cometh*, &c. Whence our Saviour took it ill of his difciples, and rebuked them, when even in the moft imminent and affrighting dangers they gave place to fear or doubt; as when in a great tempeft, *the fhip being even covered with waves, they being afraid, cried out, Lord fave*

Pfal. lxxviii. 19, 20.

Deut. i. 28. Num. xiv. 9.

Heb. iii. 18.

Jer. xvii. 5, 6.

Matt. viii. 24, 25, 26.

s, we *perish;* he said unto them, τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι; *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* And when St. Peter, walking upon waves, and beginning to sink, his heart misgiving, in like manner cried out, *Lord save me;* our Lord also reproves him with an ὀλιγόπιστε, τί ἐδίστασας; *O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?* Whence we both learn, that it is our want or weakness of faith which makes us in our greatest needs ready to sink, and that it is not excusable for us in the extremity of danger to doubt of God's protection and succour. Farther, SERM. XI. Matt. xiv. 30, 31.

8. This consideration affordeth comfort and encouragement unto us in the undertaking and prosecution of honest and prudent enterprises, giving us to hope confidently for success, how difficult or dangerous soever it appear unto us; all difficulties and improbabilities vanishing before that Omnipotency which abetteth and backeth such endeavours; the which is by faith imparted and appropriated unto us; so that we, with St. Paul, *are able to do all things by God strengthening us.* Nothing is so high or difficult (if just and reasonable) which a resolute faith in the Divine power cannot easily surmount and achieve: a word, seconded therewith, can transplant trees and transfer mountains any whither: *If ye,* saith our Lord, *have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed hence to yonder place, and it shall be removed: Ye may say to this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the roots, and be thou planted in the sea, and it shall obey you;* καὶ οὐδὲν ἀδυνατήσει ὑμῖν, *and there is nothing,* saith our Saviour, *which shall be impossible unto you;* for, saith he faith again, *All things are possible to him that believeth;* that is, unto him who relieth upon the Divine power; for that the faith he speaks of referreth thither, appeareth by several like passages in the Gospel; as for instance in that, where to the blind men imploring his relief our Lord puts this question: *Do ye believe that I can do this?* and they answering, *Yes, Lord;* he thereupon replies, *According to your faith be it done unto you.* In contemplation of this power, we may, if our duty or good occasion do call us forth, how small or weak soever in our- Phil. iv. 13. Matt. xvii. 20. Luke x. 19. xvii. 6. Mark xi. 22. Mark ix. 23. Matt. ix. 28.

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ſelves, how deſtitute ſoever of defenſive arms or offenſive weapons, naked and unarmed, *with a ſling and a ſtone*, go out againſt the biggeſt and beſt-armed Philiſtine, nothing doubtful of victory; it will be enough, if we can ſay with David, *I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of hoſts*; that is, confiding in his powerful help, as my invincible weapon and defence. But ſo much for this particular.

1 Sam. xvii. 45.

III. That notion of the word *Almighty*, which implieth God's being univerſal proprietary and poſſeſſor of all things, hath likewiſe many good uſes; we ſhall only name them, without enlarging upon them: we thence learn,

1. That we ourſelves are not our own, and therefore ought to ſubmit ourſelves with content and patience to God's diſpoſal; for that, as it is in the Goſpel, God may *do what he pleaſeth with his own*. Whence alſo we are bound, as St. Paul enjoineth us, *to glorify God with our bodies and ſpirits, which are God's*.

Matt. xx. 15.
1 Cor. vi. 20.

2. That alſo therefore we ought to be content with that portion of accommodations here which God alloweth us; for that ſince every thing is his, we can claim nothing to ourſelves; all we have doth proceed from mere liberality and bounty.

3. The ſame reaſon obligeth us to be ſatisfied, whenever Providence withdraweth what it did afford us the enjoyment of; for God doth never ſo communicate any thing, as to diveſt himſelf of the paramount title and propriety therein; all things have an immutable relation to him as Lord, and cannot be alienated from him; whence he may juſtly, when he pleaſeth, recall or reſume them into his hand.

Job i. 21.

4. Yea, hence we are obliged to be heartily thankful for all we ever have or enjoy; for that nothing is upon any account ours, or can be due to us from him; all proceeding from pure kindneſs and goodneſs.

5. We are hence obliged carefully to manage and employ all which is put into our hands for his intereſt and ſervice; as honeſt tenants and faithful ſtewards, making juſt returns and improvements; not embezzling nor abuſing any of his goods committed to us.

6. Laſtly, we may learn hence to be humble and ſober; not to be conceited or elevated in mind, or apt to glory, in regard to any thing we have; ſince we have nothing that we can juſtly eſteem or properly call our own.

IV. That ſenſe, according to which the word doth ſignify God's containing all things by his immenſe preſence, is alſo of moſt excellent uſe and influence upon our practice. We thereby may learn with what care and circumſpection, with what reverence and modeſty, with what innocence and integrity, we ought always, and in all places, to manage our converſation and behaviour; ſince we continually do think, and ſpeak, and act in the immediate preſence and under the inſpection of God; whoſe *eyes are upon the ways of man, and he ſeeth all his goings;* who *ſearcheth and trieth our hearts,* and *poſſeſſeth our reins;* who *encompaſſeth our path,* and *is acquainted with all our ways;* to whoſe *eyes all things are naked and diſſected;* according to the ſignificant and emphatical expreſſions of Scripture. Did we ſtand in the ſight of our king, we ſhould not dare to behave ourſelves rudely and indecently; were a virtuous perſon conſcious of our doings, we ſhould be aſhamed to do any baſe or filthy thing; the overſight of a grave or a wiſe perſon would reſtrain us from practiſing vanities and impertinencies: how much more ſhould the glorious majeſty of the moſt wiſe and holy God, being ever preſent to all our thoughts, words, and actions, if duly conſidered and reflected upon, keep us within awe and compaſs! how can we, if we remember that we abide always in a temple ſanctified by God's preſence, not contain ourſelves in a careful and devout poſture of ſoul[h]!

Job xxxiv. 21. Pſ. cxxxix. 3. 13, &c. Jer. xvii. 10. Heb. iv. 13. Pſ. xc. 8. Prov. xx. 27.

This conſideration alſo prompteth us to frequent addreſſes of prayer, thankſgiving, and all kind of adoration toward God: for all reaſon dictateth it to be unſeemly to be in his preſence with our back turned unto him, without demonſtrations of regard and reverence to him, with-

h Πᾶς οὖν καὶ τόπος ἱερὸς τῷ ὄντι, ἐν ᾧ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν Θεοῦ λαμβάνομεν, καὶ χρόνος. *Clem. Alex.* p. 520. vid. p. 517.

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out anſwering him when he ſpeaketh to us; t
without correſponding to the invitations which l
quently by his providence maketh to us, of con
with him, of ſeeking his favour, and imploring his
and returning thanks for his mercies.

V. Laſtly, the conſideration that God doth uph
things, and conſequently ourſelves, in being, may
ſeveral good accounts be influential upon our pr
particularly it may powerfully deter us from off
and diſpleaſing him; for put caſe our life, our livel
all the conveniences and comforts of our being,
wholly depend upon the bounty and pleaſure of an
ſon, ſhould we not be very wary and fearful to affr
injure, or diſpleaſe ſuch a perſon? It is in the high
gree ſo with us in reſpect to God; and why are we
conſiderate, that the ſame reaſon hath not the ſame
upon us?

This conſideration alſo ſhould mind us how inf
we are obliged to the goodneſs of God, who wh
may by the bare withdrawing his conſervative inf
utterly deſtroy us, and ſuffer us to fall to nothing,
notwithſtanding our many provocations, the many
lects and injuries he receiveth from us, continuall
ſerve us in his hand, and every moment imparteth
being to us. For which, and all his infinite merci
favours toward us, let us for ever yield unto hi
thanks and praiſe. *Amen.*

Maker of Heaven and Earth,

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ACTS iv. 24.

O Lord, thou art God, which haſt made heaven and earth, and the ſea, and all that in them is.

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IT may be demanded, why beſides that of *Almighty*, no other attribute of God is expreſſed in our Creed? why, for inſtance, the perfections of *infinite wiſdom* and *goodneſs* are therein omitted? I anſwer,

1. That all ſuch perfections are included in the notion of a God, whom when we profeſs to believe, we conſequently do aſcribe them to him (implicitly.) For he that ſhould profeſs to believe in God, not acknowledging thoſe perfections, would be inconſiſtent and contradictious to himſelf. *Deum negaret*, as Tertullian ſpeaks, *auferendo quod Dei eſt.* He would deny God by withdrawing what belongs to God. Adv. Marc. cap. 3.

2. The title παντοκράτωρ, as implying God's univerſal providence in the preſervation and government of the world, doth alſo involve or infer all Divine perfections diſplayed therein; all that glorious majeſty and excellency, for which he is with higheſt reſpect to be honoured and worſhipped by us, which added to the name of God doth determine what God we mean, ſuch as doth in all perfection excel, and with it doth govern the world.

3. I may add, thirdly, That the doctrine of God's univerſal providence being not altogether ſo evident to natu-

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ral light as thoſe attributes diſcovered in the making o the world, (more having doubted thereof, and diſpute againſt it with much more plauſibility,) it was therefor convenient to add it; as a matter of faith clearly and fully (as we did ſhew) atteſted unto by Divine revelation. So much may ſuffice to remove ſuch a ſcruple concerning the fulneſs and ſufficiency of the Creed in that particular. I proceed;

Maker of Heaven and Earth.

This clauſe is one of thoſe which was of later times inſerted into the Creed; none of the moſt ancient expoſitors thereof (Auſtin, Ruffin, Maximus Taurinenſis, Chryſologus, &c.) taking any notice thereof. But Irenæus, Tertullian, and other moſt ancient writers, in their rules of faith, exhibit their ſenſe thereof, and the Confeſſions of all General Councils (the Nicene, and thoſe after it) expreſs it. And there is great reaſon for it; not only thereby to diſavow and decry thoſe prodigious errors of Marcion, Manichæus, and other ſuch heretics, which did then aſcribe the creation of the world (or of ſome part thereof, ſeeming to their fancy leſs good and perfect) to another *God*, or *Principle*, inferior in worth and goodneſs to that God which was revealed in the Goſpel; or did opinionate two Principles, (not diſtinct only, but contrary one to the other;) from one whereof good things did proceed, from the other bad things were derived: but for that the creation of the world (which the holy Confeſſors of Chriſt do here in the text aſcribe unto God) is that peculiarly auguſt and admirable work, by which we learn that he is, and in good meaſure what he is; by which, I ſay, the exiſtence of God is moſt ſtrongly demonſtrated, and in which his Divine perfections are moſt conſpicuouſly diſplayed; which is the prime foundation of his authority over the world, and conſequently the chief ground of all natural religion; of our juſt ſubjection, our reaſonable duty, our humble devotion toward him: the title, *Creator of heaven and earth*, is that alſo, which moſt eſpecially characterizes and diſtinguiſhes the God whom we believe

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and adore, from all falſe and fictitious deities; for, as the Pſalmiſt ſings, *All the gods of the nations are but idols, but the Lord made the heavens:* and, *Thou*, prayeth Hezekiah, *art the God, thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou haſt made heaven and earth:* and, *The gods*, ſaith the prophet Jeremiah, *that have not made the heavens and the earth, they ſhall periſh from the earth, and from under the heavens:* and, *We preach unto you*, ſaid St. Paul to the ignorant Lycaonians, *that ye ſhould turn from thoſe vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth.* It is therefore a point, which worthily hath been inſerted into all creeds, and confeſſions of our faith, as a neceſſary object of our belief; and it is indeed a ſubject no leſs wholeſome and fruitful, than high and noble; deſerving that we employ our beſt thoughts and moſt careful attention upon it: to the commemoration thereof God conſecrated the great ſabbatical feſtivity among his ancient people; nor ſhould even the conſideration of the great work concerning our redemption aboliſh the remembrance of it: to confer ſome advantage thereto, we ſhall now ſo diſcourſe thereon, as firſt to propound ſome obſervations explicative thereof, and conducing to our information about it, then to apply the conſideration thereof to practice.

Pſ. xcvi. 5. 2 Kings xix. 15, 19. Jer. x. 11. Acts xiv. 15. xvii. 24.

We may firſt obſerve, that the ancient Hebrews, having, as it ſeems, in their language no one word properly ſignifying the world, or univerſal frame and complex of things created, (that ſyſtem, as the author *de Mundo* defines it, *conſiſting of heaven and earth, and the natures contained in them*,) did for to expreſs it uſe a collection of its chief parts, (chief abſolutely in themſelves, or ſuch in reſpect to us,) *the heaven*, and *the earth*, adding ſometimes, becauſe of the word *earth* its ambiguity, the *ſea* alſo: yea ſometimes, for fuller explication, ſubjoining to *heaven* its *hoſt*, to *earth* its *fulneſs*, to the *ſea* its *contents*. So, *In ſix days the Lord made heaven and earth*, ſaith Moſes: and, *Do not I fill heaven and earth? ſaith the Lord*, (in Jeremiah:) and, *It is eaſier for heaven and earth to paſs, than for one tittle of the law to fail*, ſaith our Saviour: and, *God*, ſaith St. Paul, *who made the world, and all things therein, ſeeing*

Σύστημα ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ γῆς, καὶ τῶν ἐν τούτοις περιεχομένων φύσεων. *de M.* 2. *Lipſ. Phyſ. St.* ii. 7. Gen. i. 1. Jer. xxiii. 24. Luke xvi. 17. Acts xvii. 24.

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that he is Lord of heaven and earth; (where the *world* *all things therein* do fignify the fame with *heaven* *earth;* he firft ufes the word (*world*) which the Gre language afforded, then adds the circumlocution, where the Hebrews did exprefs it.) By heaven and earth therefore we are, I fay, to underftand thofe two regions, fuperior and inferior, into which the whole fyftem of things i divided, together with all the beings that do refide i them, or do belong unto them, or are comprehended b them; as we fee fully expreffed in our text, and other where; particularly with utmoft diftinction by the ange in the Apocalypfe: who fwears *by him that liveth fo ever, who created the heaven, and the things that are there in, and the earth, with the things that therein are, and th fea, with the things therein.*

Pf. lxix. 34. Neh. ix. 6. Exod. xx. 11. 2 Kings xix. 15. Ifa. xlii. 5. Rev. x. 6.

By *heaven* then is underftood all the fuperior region co compaffing the globe of earth, and from it on all fides ex tended to a diftance unconceivably vaft and fpacious, with all its parts, and furniture, and inhabitants; not only fuch things in it as are vifible and material, but alfo thofe which are immaterial and invifible; fo we are plainly taught by St. Paul: *By him,* faith he, *were created all things, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, both thofe that are vifible, and thofe that are invifible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers all things were created by him, and for him:* that is, not only the material and fenfible parts, or contents of heaven (thofe bright and beautiful lamps expofed to our view with the fluid matter, in which they may be conceived to float or fwim,) but thofe beings of a more pure and refined fubftance, and thence indifcernible to our fenfe, however eminent in nature, mighty in power, exalted in dignity whofe ordinary refidence and *proper habitation* (their ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, as St. Jude termeth it) is in thofe fuperior regions; in that they are courtiers and domeftic officers of God, (whofe throne, and fpecial prefence, or the place where he more peculiarly and amply difcovereth himfelf, and difplayeth his glory, is in heaven,) attending upon him, and miniftering to him; *encircling his throne,* (as it is in th

Col. i. 16. Jude 6. Heb. i. 14. Dan. vii. 10. Pf. ciii. 21. Rev. v. 11. Matt. xviii. 10.

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Revelation,) and *always* (as our Saviour telleth us) *beholding his face;* even these all were made by God: the time indeed when, and the manner how those invisible sublime creatures were made, is not in the history of the creation, or otherwhere manifestly expressed, (because perhaps it doth exceed the capacity, or doth not suit the condition of man to understand them; or because it doth not much concern us, or not much conduceth to our edification to know them:) but that they were made by God, and that when we call God the *Maker of heaven*, they are comprehended, as the creatures of God, dwelling there, is evidently declared in Scripture[a]; for beside the fore-mentioned clear and full place of St. Paul, the angel fore-cited in the Revelation saith, that God *created the heaven, καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, and the things in it;* and in our text, it is said that God *made heaven and all things in it,* (*πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ,*) which plainly includeth the angels; if all things in it, then surely the angels, who are often expressed to be in heaven, being indeed the principal and most considerable things therein. And, *Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host,* (pray the Levites in Nehemiah,) where, according to the Jews' notion, who say there are three heavens; *Cœlum nubiferum*, or the firmament; *Cœlum astriferum*, the (starry) heavens; *Cœlum angeliferum*, or the heaven of heavens; where the angels reside, (the third heaven in St. Paul;) by the hosts of heaven, are meant the angels: as also the hosts of God do seem to signify in the 103d Psalm; where it is said, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word; Bless ye the Lord, all his hosts, ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.* Whence they are termed *the sons of God;* as where in Job it is said, *There was a day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord;* and in several other

Rev. x. 6.

Mark xii. 25. xiii. 32. &c.

Neh. ix. 6.

2 Cor. xii.

Psal. ciii. 20, 21.

Job ii. 1. xxxviii. 7. Ps. lxxxix. 6. xxix. 1.

[a] The Greek Fathers commonly (and St. Hierome after them) conceived they were made before the creation of this material world: St. Austin thinks them meant under *Fiat lux*. *De Civ. Dei*, xi. 9.

Διὰ τὸ τοῖς εἰσαγομένοις ἔτι καὶ νηπίοις κατὰ τὴν γνῶσιν ἀνεπιτήδειον. *Bas. Hex.* 1.

Φῶτα δεύτερα τοῦ πρώτου φωτὸς ἀναυγάσματα. *Naz. Orat.* 43.

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places: and St. Jude telleth us of the lapſed angels, that they did not retain τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχὴν, *their beginning*, or primitive ſtate; wherefore they had a beginning, and whence could they have that, but from God; who alone is eternal, (*who alone* originally, intrinſecally, and neceſſarily, *hath*, as St. Paul ſaith, *immortality*; and conſequently alone, (as Ariſtotle by ſeveral arguments proveth againſt Plato,) hath eternity.) The angels alſo are ſubject to God's juriſdiction and governance, which argueth their proceeding from him, and dependence upon him: in fine, the Pſalmiſt reckons them among the works of God; for having ſaid, *Bleſs the Lord, ye his angels*; and, *Bleſs the Lord, all ye his hoſts*; he recapitulating and concluding ſubjoins, *Bleſs the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion:* and again, in the 148th Pſalm, ſummoning all the creation to a conſort of doxology, he begins with the heavens, then proceeds to the earth, making a very particular recitation of the chief parts and inhabitants belonging to each; and in the firſt place mentioning the angels, then the ſtars, then the heaven of heavens, he ſubjoineth the reaſon why they ought all to praiſe God: *Let them*, ſaith he, *praiſe the name of the Lord; for he commanded, and they were created; he hath alſo eſtabliſhed them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree, which ſhall not paſs.* Thus we are by Divine revelation inſtructed concerning the exiſtence and original of thoſe heavenly inviſible beings, to the knowledge of whom, that they are, what they are, whence they are, natural light could not reach; although from the relics of primitive tradition even the Pagans themſelves commonly in part did acknowledge this truth, calling all the inferior or ſecondary gods, whom they conceived to converſe together happily (ἐν τῷ ἀνωτάτῳ τόπῳ) in the higheſt place above, as Ariſtotle ſaith, in ſubjection to God and attendance on him, the children of the Supreme God Plato calls God, Πατέρα καὶ Δημιουργὸν, the *Father and Framer* of them all, according (as he avoweth himſelf) to ancient tradition. And thus concerning thoſe beings piety doth oblige us to believe and profeſs that God is their Maker, it eſpecially conducing to his glory to be

Jude 6.

1 Tim. vi. 16.

Ariſt. de Cœlo, i. cap. ult.

Pſal. ciii. 20, &c.

Ariſt. de Cœlo, i. 3. Polit. i. 1.

Plato in Tim.

ieve, that he is the Author of their ſublime natures, and Donor of thoſe excellent properties, with which they are endowed, and wherein they ſo far ſurpaſs all other beings.

As for all other things both in heaven and earth, the material frame of the viſible world, with all its parts compacted together in ſo fair, ſo fit, ſo firm and ſtable an order, they (as we have ſometime ſufficiently diſcourſed) even to natural underſtanding ſpeak themſelves to have been produced by a moſt wiſe, moſt powerful, moſt beneficent author, that is, by God; the which is confirmed by innumerable teſtimonies of holy writ, ſo evident and obvious, that we need not to cite them: and to thus much the generality of mankind hath always conſented; as alſo the moſt and beſt reputed philoſophers did in general terms avow it, acknowledging God the Author and Builder of the world.

But there is one particular, wherein they ſeem unanimouſly to have diſſented from what Chriſtian piety inclines us to acknowledge, as moſt ſuitable to the Divine perfection and majeſty; which concerns the origin of that *matter*, of which corporeal things do ſubſiſt. For even Plato himſelf, who ſo poſitively doth aſſert the world to have been framed by God, is yet conceived (I ſpeak ſo dubiouſly, becauſe his writings about this point are ſomewhat obſcure, and, as Juſtin Martyr proves, inconſiſtent with themſelves) to ſuppoſe the matter of things to be eternal; he aſcribing only to God the forming and diſpoſing it into a good order, anſwerable to ſome patterns preexiſtent in his wiſe underſtanding; [b] even as a good artiſt doth out of an unſhapen lump of ſtuff frame a handſome piece of work, conformable to ſome *idea* (or image) preconceived in his fancy: ſo that he repreſents God, rather as a Builder out of prepared materials, than as a Creator of the world. *Socrates and Plato*, ſaith Plutarch,

Tim. p. 1058. Juſt. Mart. Cohort. 1. ad. Græc. p. 8.

Plut. de Placitis, i. 3.

[b] Ut igitur faber, cum quid ædificaturus eſt, non ipſe facit materiam, ſed a utitur, quæ ſit parata, fictorque item cera; ſic iſti providentiæ divinæ materiam præſto eſſe oportuit, non quam ipſe faceret, ſed quam haberet paratam. *Ze. apud Lact.* ii. pag. 180.

Quibus oculis intueri potuit veſter Plato fabricam illam tanti operis; qua conſtrui a Deo, atque ædificari mundum facit? *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* &c.

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did ſuppoſe three principles of things, God, matter, idea: God is the mind; Matter the firſt ſubject of generation and corruption; Idea an incorporeal ſubſiſtence in the conceptions of God. Anaxagoras alſo, as the ſame author (and Ariſtotle before him) telleth us, did aſſert two principles[c]; the one *paſſive*, the *matter*, conſiſting of an infinite number of ſmall particles like to one another in ſhape; the other *active*, *underſtanding*, which ranged thoſe troops of little bodies into order: to the ſame effects Pythagoras his conceits, though expreſſed with much obſcurity, are reduced. Thales his opinion was in effect the ſame, who, as Cicero telleth us, *ſaid, that water was the principle of things, and God that mind, which faſhioned all things out of water*[d]. The Stoics alſo were of the ſame opinion: *It ſeems to them*, ſaith Laertius in Zeno's life, *that there are two principles of all things, the agent, and the patient; that the patient is the matter void of qualities, but the agent, reaſon which is therein, that is, God*[e]. Tertullian againſt Hermogenes ſaith, that *he did take from the Stoics to place matter with God; which matter did always exiſt, being neither born nor made, and nowiſe having either beginning or end, out of which afterward the Lord made all things*[f]: and, *Come now*, ſaith the ſame Father in his book againſt the Valentinians, *let the Pythagoreans learn, let the Stoics acknowledge, and even Plato himſelf, whence matter, whom they would have unmade, did draw its both origin and ſubſtance toward all this ſtructure of the world*[g]. Yea, Ariſtotle tells us, that generally all natural philoſo-

[c] Ἀναξαγόρας τι γὰρ μηχανῇ χρῆται τῷ νῷ πρὸς κοσμοποιΐαν. *Ariſt. Met.* i. 4.

[d] Thales aquam dixit eſſe initium rerum, Deum autem eſſe mentem, quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret. *De N. D.* 1.

[e] Δοκεῖ δὲ αὐτοῖς ἀρχὰς εἶναι τῶν ὅλων δύο· τὸ ποιοῦν καὶ τὸ πάσχον· τὸ μὲν οὖν πάσχον εἶναι τὴν ἄποιον ὕλην· τὸ δὲ ποιοῦν τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ λόγον τὸν θεόν. *Laert. in Zen.* Lipſ. in Phyſ. Sen. Ep. 65.

[f] Sumpſit a Stoicis materiam cum Domino ponere, quæ et ipſa ſemper fuerit neque nata, neque facta, nec initium habens omnino, nec finem, ex quo Dominus omnia poſtea fecerit. *Tertul. in Hermog.* 1.

[g] Age nunc, diſcant Pythagorici, agnoſcant Stoici, Plato ipſe, unde materia, quam innatam volunt et originem et ſubſtantiam traxerit in omnem hanc ſtruem mundi. *Adv. Valent.* 15.

Vid. Athenag. Leg. pag. 19.

ners before him did conceive, and did assume it for a principle, that nothing was made out of nothing, or that every thing produced had necessarily some preexistent matter, out of which it was produced: *It is*, saith he, *the common opinion of naturalists, that nothing can be made out of nothing;* and, *That it is impossible, that any thing could proceed from nothing, all that have studied about nature do consent* [h]: which principle Aristotle himself not only admits, but extends farther, affirming it impossible that any thing should be produced out of matter not predisposed to admit the form which is to be produced; οὐδὲ ἔστι ὅτι ἂν ἐξ ὅτου ἂν, *Neither can*, saith he, *every thing be made of every thing, but out of some subject fitted thereto*, or susceptive thereof,) *as animals, and plants out of their seed* [i]. Which principles deduced from the observing natural effects, or works of art performed always by alterations, additions, subtractions, or transpositions of some matter subjacent, we may safely, in respect only to such kinds of effects, proceeding in the ordinary course of nature, admit; allowing no natural agent, no created artificer, sufficient to produce any thing without some matter or subject aptly qualified and prepared to receive its influence; but from hence to conclude universally, that every action possible doth require a matter preexistent, or a predisposed subject, is nowise reasonable: because such a thing doth not usually according to the course of nature happen; because there is no cause obvious that can perform so much; because we are not acquainted with the manner of way of doing such a thing, that therefore the thing is in itself absolutely impossible, is no warrantable argumentation: no logic will allow us from particular ex-

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Phys. i. 9.

h Κοινὴ δόξα τῶν φυσικῶν οὐδὲν γίγνεσθαι ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος—Τὸ γιγνόμενον ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος γίγνεσθαι ἀδύνατον, περὶ γὰρ ταύτης ὁμογνωμονοῦσι τῆς δόξης πάντες οἱ περὶ φύσεως. *Phys.* i. 4. 8.

Vid. de Gener. et Corrup. i. 3. et Metaph. i. 1, 3.

i Ἀεὶ ἔσί τι ὁ ὑπόκειται, ἐξ οὗ γίγνεται τὸ γιγνόμενον, οἷον τὰ φυτὰ, καὶ τὰ ζῶα ἐκ σπέρματος. *Phys.* i. 8.

Erit aliquid quod aut ex nihilo oriatur, aut in nihilum subito occidat; quis hoc physicus dixit unquam? *Cic. de Divin.* 2.

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periments to eſtabliſh general concluſions, eſpecially ſuch as do concern the determination of what is abſolutely impoſſible; that muſt be fetched from abſtracted notions of reaſon, not from ſingular appearances to ſenſe: there may be, for all that we (we pitifully ſhortſighted creatures in this our dark ſtate) can by any means know, agents of another ſort, and powers in manner of efficacy much differing from all thoſe which come within the narrow compaſs of our obſervation. Eſpecially to imagine, that the Supreme Being, who made the world in a manner, whatever that manner were, incomprehenſible, cannot himſelf act otherwiſe than we ſee theſe inferior things (not only infinitely lower in degree, but wholly different in nature) do act, is groſsly vain and unreaſonable: *It is impoſſible*, ſaith St. Chryſoſtom well, *for man's nature by curious inquiry to penetrate the workmanſhip of God.* From ſenſe or experience then ſuch concluſions cannot well be derived; it aſſures us that ſome effects are poſſible, but cannot help us to determine what is impoſſible. Neither are there any certain principles of reaſon, from whence it may be collected, that it is impoſſible, that ſome ſubſtances ſhould be totally produced *de novo*, or receive completely an exiſtence, which they had not before: that no ſuch principles are innate to our minds, (if indeed there be at all any innate principles, which ſome philoſophers deny,) every man's experience can tell him: neither do theſe philoſophers allege any ſuch; nor (as we before ſhewed) can any ſuch be drawn from experience. If they ſay, the propoſition is αὐτόπιστος, or evidently credible of itſelf, without any proof, it is a precarious and groundleſs aſſertion; ſuch as ought not to be admitted in any ſcience, or any diſceptation; except they can ſhew that the terms of theſe propoſitions, (or of the like equivalent ones,) A ſubſtance is producible altogether *de novo;* A ſubſtance may exiſt, which did not exiſt; Something may be produced out of nothing; do involve a contradiction; which it rather is evident they do not, there being nothing contained in the notion of ſubſtance inconſiſtent with ſuch a producibility, or with novity of exiſtence, no more than there is

Ἀδύνατον τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ δημιουργίαν περιεργάζεσθαι. *Chryſ. in Gen. λογ. β'.*

the notion of figure or of motion, which things no man rdly denies to receive a new exiſtence. In fine, nothing more reaſonable than to confeſs, that our reaſon can wiſe reach the extent of all powers and all poſſibilities; d that we much, as St. Chryſoſtom ſpeaks, do tranſ- eſs our measures and bounds, if we pretend to know at things God is able to produce, or how he doth oduce any: *His works*, as Lactantius ſpeaketh, *are ſeen ith eyes; but how he made them, the mind itſelf cannot ſee*[k]. oſe opinions therefore of the ancient philoſophers, that e matter of the world (or of natural things) was eternal d neceſſarily preexiſtent, and that there could be no reation out of nothing, were aſſumed altogether without ny clear or ſure foundation. We may ſay unto them, s our Lord did once ſay to the Sadducees, *Ye err, not nowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. The po-* erty and narrowneſs *of man's natural underſtanding*, (not going uſually beyond matters obvious to ſenſe) *and their inability, by the meanneſs of their reaſon, to look up to the light of truth, did*, as St. Baſil ſays, *deceive them*[l]. And that theſe opinions (revived and embraced by divers perſons in our days) are falſe, and contrary to our faith, that in truth all the *matter* of things both could be, and really was, created by God, may from ſeveral reaſons appear.

Τραχήλου αἰωνίου μέτρον. *Chryſ.*

Matt. xxii. 29.

1. It is often in general terms affirmed in Scripture, that God did make all things; all things in heaven and earth. Now it is unſafe, and never, without urgent reaſon allowable, to make limitations or reſtrictions of univerſal propoſitions, eſpecially of ſuch as are frequently and conſtantly thus ſet down: and, like as St. Paul ſomewhere diſcourſes, becauſe it is ſaid in the prophets, *Every one that believeth in him ſhall not be aſhamed*; and,

Rom. x. 11, &c.

[k] —hoc eſt modum conditionis ſuæ tranſgredi, nec intelligere quouſque homini liceat accedere. *Lact.*

Opera ipſius videntur oculis, quomodo autem illa fecerit, ne mente quidem videtur. *Lact.* 2.

[l] Ἐξαπατῶσι δὲ τὴς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἡ ἀσθένεια—ἡ ἀσθένεια διὰ λογισμῶν, ἀπαίρειν εἰς τὸ ὕψος ἀνιδεῖν τῆς ἀληθείας. *Baſ. Hexaem. Hom.* β.

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Whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved; therefore both Jews and Greeks, in case of their belief and invocation of God, are capable of acceptance and salvation; ὁ γάρ ἐστι διαστολὴ, for that there is no distinction or exception made: so it being said universally and unlimitedly, that all things were made, and no reason appearing which compels to restrain that universality, therefore the matter of things was also made; the matter being one thing, yea in the opinion of most philosophers, as well ancient as modern, the principal thing, the only substantial thing in nature; all other things being only modes, affections, or relations thereof. Whence Aristotle telleth us, that most of the first philosophers did affirm nothing at all really to be made, and nothing ever to be destroyed; because matter did always subsist and abide the same, as if no other thing beside in nature had any being considerable. If God therefore did not produce matter itself, he could hardly be accounted author of any thing in nature, so far would he be from being truly affirmed the maker of all things: upon this ground Cicero, as Lactantius cites him, denied that God was the author of any of the elements: *It is not probable*, said he, *that the matter, whence all things did arise, was made by divine Providence*; and, *If matter was not made by God, then neither earth, nor water, nor air, nor fire, were made by him* [m]; to invert which discourse, we say, that God did make all these things, (earth, sea, fire, and air,) as the holy Scripture frequently asserts, wherefore the matter of them was also his work: he was not only, as St. Basil speaks, *an inventor of figures*, (or a raiser of motions,) *but the maker of nature itself* [n]; and of all that is substantial therein.

Arist. Phys. i. 8. Metaph. i. 3.

2. Again, God is in Scripture affirmed to be the true proprietary and possessor of all things, none excepted;

[m] Primum igitur non est probabile eam materiam rerum unde orta sunt omnia, esse divina Providentia effectam, sed habere et habuisse vim et naturam suam:—Quod si non est a Deo materia facta, ne terra quidem, et aqua, et aër, et ignis a Deo factus est. *Cic. apud Lactant.* ii. pag. 150.

[n] Ὁ θεὸς——οὐχὶ σχημάτων ἐστὶν εὑρετὴς, ἀλλ' αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως τῶν ὄντων δημιουργός. *Bas. Hex.* β.

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ſo, if he did not make them? for *he that did not cannot*, as Juſtin Martyr argues, *have any right to hich is not made*[o]. It is the argument by which cripture frequently proves God to be the owner and er of things, becauſe he made them: *The earth*, the Pſalmiſt, *is the Lord's, and the fulneſs thereof; orld, and they that dwell therein: for he hath founded n the ſeas, and prepared it upon the floods.* So, be- (we may ſay) he did produce matter, and doth ſuſ- ts being; therefore he, by the moſt excellent ſort, pon the beſt ground of right, doth own it, and may uſe it at his pleaſure; otherwiſe might we not ſay with llian, *If God did not make matter, he uſing a thing s own, becauſe not made by him, either he uſed it pre- ſly, as needing it, or injuriouſly, as uſurping upon it rce*[p].

Pſal. xxiv. 1. Gen. xiv. 19. Deut. x. 14.

The ſuppoſing any thing to be eternal, uncreated, ndependent upon God, doth advance that being in reſpects unto an equality with God, imparting thereto at and divine attributes: *It will become*, as St. Baſil *God's peer, or equal in dignity, being dignified with me privileges.* That ſuppoſition likewiſe in effect eth God of thoſe ſpecial perfections, independency ll-ſufficiency; making him in his operations and mances to depend upon, and to be in a manner ſub- nto, matter; to need its concourſe, and to be unable rform any thing farther than it admits: for, *None*, rtullian diſcourſeth, *is free from needing that, whoſe he uſeth; none is exempt from ſubjection to that, he needs that he may uſe; and none who lends of his to uſe, is not in this ſuperior to him, to whom he it for uſe*[q]. The very doubting about this made

Ὁμότιμος ἔσται Θεῷ τῶν αὐτῶν προσβιβάσας ἀξιούμενος.

[o] γὰρ μὴ πεπτωκότι οὐδεμία ἐξουσία πρὸς τὸ μὴ γεγενές. *Juſt. M. Cohort.* . i. p. 22.

[p] de alieno uſus aut precario uſus eſt, qua egens ejus, aut injuria, qua lens ejus. *Tert. adv. Hermog.* 9.

[q] emo non eget eo, de cujus utitur; nemo non ſubjicitur ei, cujus eget ſit uti; et nemo qui præſtat de ſuo uti, non in hoc ſuperior eſt eo, cui it uti. *Tert. adv. Herm.* iv. 5.

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Seneca put ſuch abſurd and impious queſtions as theſe: *How God's power is limited? whether he effects whatever he pleaſeth, or is diſappointed by want of matter? whether he doth not form many things ill, not from defect of art in himſelf, but from diſobedience of the ſubject-matter*[r]? Which queſtions we eaſily reſolve by ſaying, nothing is impoſſible to God; his will can never be croſſed or diſappointed; he can never do any thing bad, or imperfect in its kind; becauſe he createth matter itſelf anſwerable to his deſign.

4. As Ariſtotle well diſcourſed againſt the ancient philoſophers, who, before Anaxagoras, did aſſign but one principle of things, a material and paſſive one, as if no active principle were required; ſo may we argue againſt him and them together. If God did produce and inſert an active principle into nature, (as who can imagine thoſe admirable works of nature, the ſeminal propagation and nutrition of plants, and however more eſpecially the generation, motion, ſenſe, fancy, appetite, paſſion of animals, to be accompliſhed by a mere paſſive agitation of matter, without ſome active principle diſtinct from matter, which diſpoſeth and determineth it to the production of ſuch effects?) if God could, I ſay, produce and inſert ſuch an active principle, (ſuch an ἐντελέχεια, as the philoſopher calleth it,) why might he not as well produce a paſſive one, ſuch as the matter is? what greater difficulty could he find in doing it?

5. Yea farther, if God hath produced immaterial beings, or ſimple and uncompounded ſubſtances diſtinct from matter, ſuch as angels and the ſouls of men, merely out of nothing, (for out of what preexiſtent ſtuff could they be made?) then may he as well create matter out of nothing; for what greater difficulty can we conceive in creating ſo much lower and more imperfect a thing, than

[r] Quantum Deus poſſit; materiam ipſe ſibi formet; an data utatur; utrum idea materiæ prius ſuperveniat, an materia ideæ; Deus quicquid vult efficiat, an in multis rebus illum tractanda deſtituant; et a magno artifice prave formentur multa, non quia ceſſat ars, ſed quia id in quo exercetur ſæpe inobſequens arti eſt. *Sen. Præf. Nat. Qu.*

in creating thoſe more excellent ſubſtances, ſo much fuller, as it were, of entity, or ſo far more removed from nothing? If any one thing is producible out of nothing, why may not all things capable of exiſtence be ſo produced by a competent and omnipotent virtue? *Why not*, as Tertullian argued, *all things out of nothing, if any thing out of nothing; except if the divine virtue, which drew ſomewhat out of nothing, was inſufficient to produce all things thence?* But that ſuch immaterial ſubſtances were produced by God, we before, from many plain teſtimonies of Divine revelation, did ſhew: and particularly the ſouls of men are produced from God's breath, or by the efficacy of his word.

6. The manner of God's making the world, expreſſed in Scripture, by mere will and command, (*He ſpake, and it was done; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt; he commanded, and they were created,*) that only by uttering the word *fiat*, (not audibly, but mentally, that is, by an act of volition,) all things ſhould be formed and conſtituted in their ſpecifical natures and perfections, doth argue, that matter, or any other thing poſſible, might eaſily by the divine power be produced out of nothing. Likewiſe effecting miracles ſuperior or contrary to the law and courſe of nature, without any preparatory diſpoſitions induced into the ſuſcipient matter, in the ſame manner, by mere willing, ſaying, or commanding, whereof there be in the Scripture frequent inſtances, doth perſuade the ſame; θέλω, καθαρίσθητι, *I will; be thou cleanſed*: *Woman, great is thy faith*, γενηθήτω σοι, ὡς θέλεις· *be it to thee, as thou deſireſt*: νεανίσκε, σοὶ λέγω, ἐγέρθητι, *Young man, I ſay to thee, Wake*, from the ſleep of death: ſo did our Saviour ſpeak, and the effect immediately followed; whereby, as he demonſtrated his divine power, ſo he declared the manner, whereby divine power doth incomprehenſibly operate in the production of things; and that it therein nowiſe dependeth upon matter: for it is nowiſe harder

Pſal. xxxiii. 9. cxlviii. 5.

Luke v. 13. Matt. xv. 28. Luke vii. 14.

[8] Cur non omnia ex nihilo, ſi aliquid ex nihilo; niſi ſi inſufficiens fuit Divina virtus omnibus producendis, quæ aliquid protulerit ex nihilo? *Tertull. adv. Herm.* 15.

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or more impoſſible to produce matter itſelf, than to produce a form therein without or againſt an aptitude to receive it: nay, it ſeemeth more difficult *to raiſe children unto Abraham out of ſtones*, than to draw them out of nothing; there being a poſitive obſtacle to be removed, here no apparent reſiſtance; there as well ſomewhat preceding to be deſtroyed, as ſomewhat new to be produced, here only ſomewhat ſimply to be produced: eſpecially conſidering, as we ſaid, that God uſeth no other means, inſtruments, or applications in theſe productions, than his bare word or command; which there is no reaſon why we ſhould not conceive as able immediately to make the matter, as to produce the forms of things.

Matt. iii. 9.

7. Laſtly, The holy text, deſcribing the manner and order of the creation, doth inſinuate this truth. *The Scripture*, ſaith Tertullian well, *doth firſt pronounce the earth to be made, then ſetteth out its quality; as likewiſe firſt profeſſing the heaven made, it in the ſequel doth ſuperinduce its diſpoſition*[t]. *In the beginning*, ſaith Moſes, *God made heaven and earth; now the earth was without form*; that is, it ſeems, God at firſt did make the matter of heaven and earth devoid of all form and order, a confuſed and unſhapen maſs; then he digeſted and diſtinguiſhed the parts of them, by ſeveral ſteps, orderly raiſing thence all thoſe various kinds, and well arrayed hoſts of goodly creatures: firſt he made the ſtones and timber, and all requiſite materials, then did he rear and frame this ſtately fabric. So the words do ſound, and may well be underſtood.

From theſe premiſes we may conclude againſt thoſe philoſophers, who, deſtitute of the light of revelation, did conceit otherwiſe, and againſt thoſe Chriſtians who have followed the philoſophers, (as Hermogenes of old, and Volkelius of late, together with the ſectators of their opi-

[t] Scriptura terram primo factam edicit, dehinc qualitatem ipſius edifferit; ſicut et cœlum primo factum profeſſa dehinc diſpoſitionem ejus ſuperinducit. *Tertull. contra Hermog.* 26.

Τὴν ὕλην προυπεστήσας εἰδοποίησιν ὕστερον, ἑκάστῳ τάξιν καὶ σχῆμα, καὶ μέγεθος περιθείς. *Greg. Naz. Orat.* 43.

ons,) that God did create, (in the moſt ſtrict and ſcho- ſtical ſenſe of that word, did create,) that is, either im- ediately or mediately did produce out of nothing, or d beſtow entirely a new exiſtence unto every thing, hich is, not excepting any one; and that is the ſenſe of e words, having *made heaven and earth*; or of the title, *laker of heaven and earth*, aſcribed unto God.

Which title as all ſober Chriſtians have always ac- nowledged, and the holy oracles do moſt plainly avouch, as to the one true God alone, (for, *to us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things*,) ſo there were ivers heretics of old, Marcion and others of the Gnoſtic rew, who contradicted it; affirming, that the God of the Old Teſtament, who made the world and enacted the ancient Law, whom Moſes and the Prophets did declare, was not he ſame God with him from whom the Goſpel proceeded, and who is preached therein; the Moſaic God being a worſe conditioned God, fierce and rigid, angry and implacable, delighting in wars and miſchiefs; but the evangelical God, the Father of our Lord, being mild and gentle; void of all wrath and ſpleen; very indulgent and beneficent[u]. Of kin to that fancy of Marcion, was the error of the Manichees, who ſuppoſed two firſt cauſes of things; from one whereof good, from the other evil, did fatally proceed; which conceit, it ſeems, they drew from the Perſian, Egyptian, or other ethnical doctrines; the which we have recited by Plutarch in his diſcourſe about Iſis and Oſiris; *The Perſian magi*, ſaid he, *had their Oromazes and Arimanius; the Egyptians, their Oſiris and Typhon; the Chaldeans, their good and bad planets; the Greeks, their Zeus and Hades; the Pythagoreans, their Monas and Dyas;*

1 Cor. viii. 6.

[u] Prædicat hic duos eſſe Patres, diviſaque regna:
Eſſe mali cauſam Dominum, qui condidit orbem;
Quique figuravit carnem ſpiramine vivam;
Quique dedit legem, et vatum qui voce locutus;
Hunc negat eſſe bonum, juſtum tamen eſſe fatetur,
Crudelem, durum, belli cui ſæva voluptas,
Judicio horrendum, precibus manſueſcere nullis:
Eſſe alium ſuadens, nulli qui cognitus unquam;
Hunc ait eſſe bonum, nullum qui judicat æque,
Sed ſpargit cunctis vitam, non invidet ulli. *Adv. Marc. Poëm.* 1.

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Empedocles, his Concord and Discord[x], &c. The like report we have in divers other writers: the common reason, or ground, upon which these erroneous conceits were built, was this; there appearing to be in nature some things imperfect, and some things bad, (as ill dispositions, inclinations, and passions of mind; ill tempers and diseases of body, attended with pains and troubles in life; vices, discords, deformities, antipathies, irregularities, monsters, poisons, and the like things dispersed in nature,) this sort of things, they supposed could not proceed from perfect goodness, the fountain of what was good, lovely, orderly, convenient, pleasant, and desirable: *If* (discourseth Plutarch, expressing the main of their argument) *nothing can naturally arise without a cause, and good cannot afford causality to evil, it is necessary that nature should have a proper seed and principle of evil as well as good: and thus it seems to the most and wisest; for they indeed conceive two gods as it were counterplotting each other; one the contriver and producer of good things, and the other of bad; calling the better one God; the other, Dæmon*[y]. But this discourse hath two faulty suppositions: it supposeth some things to be imperfect and evil, which are not truly such; and to those things, which are truly such, it assigneth an imaginary and wrong cause.

1. It supposeth some beings according to their original nature and constitution to be evil and imperfect; which supposition is, I say, false; for there is no sort of creature, which did not at first pass the Divine approbation:
Gen. i. 31. *God saw every thing which he had made, and behold it was very good:* good, that is, convenient and suitable to its design, (or its Author's idea,) fair and decent in its place, according to its proportion; very good, that is, perfect and complete in its degree, without any defect,

[x] Plut. de Iside et Osiride. Aug. de Civ. Dei, xx. 5. cum Lud. Vive. Laertius in procemio. Plato de Leg. x. Eusebius de Præp. 24. Arist. Metaph. iv. 1. Simplic. in Epict.

[y] Εἰ γὰρ ὑθὶν ἀναιτίως πίφυκε γινέσθαι, ἀρχὰν δὲ κακοῦ τ' ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἂν παρέσχε, δεῖ γένεσιν ἰδίαν καὶ ἀρχὴν ὥσπερ ἀγαθοῦ, καὶ κακοῦ τὴν φύσιν, &c. *Plut. de Is. et Osir.*

blemish, or flaw; not liable to any reasonable blame or exception. [z] There are indeed among the creatures some degrees of perfection, (it was fit there should be so in great variety, that things might by comparison illustrate and commend one another; that there might be regular subordinations, and subserviencies, and harmonies; that several faculties of intelligent creatures might be exercised, and improved, and delighted; that the πολυποίκιλος σοφία, *the manifold*, or multiform, *wisdom* of the Creator might be displayed, acknowledged, and celebrated; there are, I say, for such purposes in nature creatures gradually different in excellency,) whence some things may be said comparatively imperfect, or rather less excellent and noble in respect to other things, endued with higher faculties, or (as they be sometimes called) perfections of nature; some things are less active, and more passive than others; are not so capable of enjoyments delectable unto, and more subject to impressions distasteful to, their particular nature; which passivities and displeasures are not simply wills, because they do suit the degree of the particular natures of those subjects, being also ever over balanced with other pleasing activities and enjoyments: so have things different measures of excellency; but nothing, as it comes from God's hand, or stands in its rank in nature, is positively imperfect, or void of that perfection which is due to its kind; much less is any creature absolutely bad, that is, ugly, or noxious, or troublesome, or cumbersome to the universe; so that it were better away out of it, than in it. *God*, saith the Hebrew Wise Man, *created all things, that they might have their being, and the generations of the world were healthful, and there is no poison of destruction in them.* Every thing contributes somewhat to the use and benefit, or to the beauty and ornament of the whole: no weed grows out of the earth, no insect creeps upon the ground, which hath not its elegancy, and yields not its profit; nothing is abomi-

[z] Naturæ omnes quoniam sunt, et ideo habent modum suum, speciem suam, et quandam secum pacem suam, profecto bonæ sunt. *Aug. de Civ. D.* xii.

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nable or despicable, though all things are not alike amiable and admirable: there is therefore nothing in all the compass of nature unfit or unworthy to have proceeded from God; nothing which he beseemingly, without derogation to his excellencies, may not own for his work; nothing which in its rank and degree doth not confer to the manifestation of his glorious power, admirable wisdom, and excellent goodness: *O Lord,* (cried the devout Psalmist upon particular survey and consideration of them,) *how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.* That which we call poison, is such only relatively, being noxious or destructive to one part, but innocent, wholesome, and useful to some other part; and never prejudicial to the whole body of things: yea, even to that part itself it is commonly beneficial in some case or season; affording, if not continual alimony, yet sometime physic thereto, and serving to expel another poison or mischief more imminently dangerous. [a] That which we call a monster, is not unnatural in regard to the whole contexture of causes, but ariseth no less methodically, than any thing most ordinary; and it also hath its good end and use, well serving to illustrate the beauty and convenience of nature's usual course. As for pain and grief incident to the natures of things, without regard to any demerit or justice, they are not properly evils, but adherences to the less perfect natures of things; [b] in a state liable to which God not only justly, but wisely, according to his pleasure, might constitute things, for the reasons and ends before insinuated; for no reason obliged him to confer upon every thing extreme perfection; he might dispense his liberalities in what kind and measure he thought good. In fine, the reason of offence we take at any thing of this kind, seeming bad or ugly to us, ariseth from our defect

Ps. civ. 24.

[a] Ἔστι τὰ τέρατα τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τι παρὰ φύσιν δ' οὐ πάντα, ἀλλ' ἀεὶ ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ παρὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀεὶ, καὶ τὸν ἐξ ἀνάγκης οὐκ γίνεται παρὰ φύσιν. *Arist. de Gen. Anim.* 4.

[b] Τῆς τοῦ ὅλου δημιουργίας, ἕνεκα τοῦ ἐπιέρτου, καὶ ἀναγκαίας φύσεως. *Max. Tyr.* 25.

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f knowledge and ſagacity, we not being able to diſcern he particular tendency of each thing to the common utility and benefit of the world[c].

2. But as for thoſe real imperfections and evils, truly ſo called, (*which* alone, as St. Baſil ſpeaketh, *are properly evil, and moſt worthy of the appellation of evils*[d],) habitual diſtempers of ſoul, and irregular actions; errors, and vices, and ſins; we need not ſearch for any one eternal or primitive cauſe of them: although order, uniformity, beauty, and perfection do, yet diſorder, confuſion, deformity, and defect do not, argue any unity of cauſe, whence they ſhould ſpring; the true cauſes of them are ſufficiently notorious; not the will or power of a Creator, but the wilfulneſs and impotency of creatures are the fountains of them. They are no ſubſtantial beings, and ſo do not need an infinite power to create them; they do hardly need a poſitive cauſe; being themſelves rather defects, than effects; privations of being, than poſitive beings: *Let no man*, ſaith St. Auſtin, *ſeek an efficient cauſe of a bad will; for there is no efficient, but a deficient thereof; for that itſelf is not an effection, but a defection*[e]: and, *An evil will*, ſaith he again, *is the efficient cauſe of an ill work; an evil will hath no cauſe*[f]; that is, none beſide itſelf, or its own deficiency. And again; *Evil hath no nature, but the loſs of good hath received the name of evil*[g]: however, moſt certainly, *the riſe and root of ſin is our free will and choice*[h]; it is κακὸν βλάστημα προαιρέσεως, as Cyril Hier.

Peccatum a Deo non eſt, quia nec eſt. *Lipſ.*

[c] Divina nos admonet providentia non res inſipienter vituperare, ſed utilitatem rerum diligenter inquirere, et ubi noſtrum ingenium vel infirmitas deficit, ibi credere occulta, &c.; atque hæc ipſa aut humilitatis exercitatio eſt, aut elationis attritio. *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, ii. 22.

[d] Τὰ κυρίως κακὰ, ἅπερ μάλιστα εἰσὶ τῆς τῶν κακῶν προσηγορίας ἄξια. *Baſ. in Orat.* Quod Deus non eſt author mali.

[e] Nemo quærat efficientem cauſam malæ voluntatis, non enim eſt efficiens, ſed deficiens; quia nec illa effectio eſt, ſed defectio.

[f] Mala voluntas efficiens eſt operis mali, malæ autem voluntatis efficiens eſt nihil. *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, xii. 6, 7.

[g] Mali nulla natura eſt, ſed amiſſio boni mali nomen accepit. *Aug. de C. D.* xi. 9.

[h] Ἀρχὴ καὶ ῥίζα τῆς ἁμαρτίας τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ αὐτεξούσιον. *Baſ. ubi ſupr.*

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ſaith, *a bad ſprout from our choice.* Men, or other lectual and free agents, their voluntarily averting ſelves from the ſupreme true good to inferior app goods; their wilfully declining from the way whicl doth ſhew and preſcribe to them; their rejecting the ad and diſobeying the laws of God; their thwarting th tates of that reaſon which God did put in them; abuſing their natural faculties; their perverting an rupting themſelves, and others alſo, by ill example ſuaſion, allurement, violence; theſe cauſes of ſuch are moſt viſible and palpable: we need not go fa riſe to the top of things, to find an author, upon we may charge our evils; they are moſt truly calle *ways*, our *works*, our *imaginations*, our *inventions* a *vices;* they are the children of our affected ſtupidit our naughty ſloth; [i] of our precipitant choice, of our born will, of our unbridled paſſion; they are wholl puted to us; we are blamed, we are condemned, puniſhed for them: [k] as it is horrible blaſphemy to a them to the moſt good God; ſo it is vain to imagin other neceſſary principle, any uncreated miſchievous manius, any ſpiteful Cacodæmon, any eternal Fate, ther them upon.

Deut. iv. 16. xxxi. 29. Gen. vi. 11. Exod. xxxii. 7, &c.

The miſchiefs alſo of pain and grief conſequent thoſe diſtempers and miſdemeanors (*that unwilling of wilful evils*, as Damaſcene calls them) have ver cernible originals: they are partly to be imputed t and partly attributed to God: we by our faults de and draw them to ourſelves; God in juſtice and w doth inflict them on us: *Perditio tua ex te; O I thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf;* and, *Woe unto their ſou they have rewarded evil unto themſelves:* ſo doth charge the cauſe of ſuch evils upon us; and, *Shall be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not don*

'Εκουσίων κακῶν ἀκούσια ἔκγονα. *Damaſ. de Orth. F.* iv. 20.

Hoſ. xiii. 9. Iſa. iii. 9. Amos iii. 6.

[i] Τὴν μοχθηρίαν ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς ἑξουσία ποιέσει τι καὶ τελεσφορεῖ. *Ma* xxv.

[k] Αἰτία ἑλομένου· θεὸς ἀναίτιος. *Plato de Rep.* x.

Οὐ γὰρ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, μὰ Δία, οὐκ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ. *Max. Tyr.*

not evil and good proceed out of the Most High? I he Lord, and there is none else; I form the light, and e darkness; I make peace, and create evil: so God as- es the causality of them to himself. We need there- not to inquire after any other cause of these evils, *a pœnæ,*) so called because they are displeasing to or fancy; although considering the needfulness and lness of them in respect to public benefit, (as they xemplary and monitive,) and their wholesomeness for cular correction and cure, (for, *No chastening,* as the ftle saith, *for the present seemeth to be joyous, but ous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable of righteousness unto them which are exercised there-* in such respects they may rather be called good gs; however, as they have any thing bad in them, proceed from us; as they contain somewhat good, are from God: which sufficiently confuteth those ical opinators, and decideth the controversy; it being to suppose any other, beside these most apparent s of such evils; our bad desert, and God's just pro- ce. It is considerable, that even vice (although the t thing in the world, and bad to the subject thereof) t in some respects useful; it in regard to the whole t unprofitable; it serveth to the illustration of God's attributes; it is a foil to virtue, and setteth off its . But let thus much suffice concerning the objects e creation.

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Lam. iii. 38. Isa. xlv. 7. Tertull. in Marc. 2.

Heb. xii. 11.

Γίνεται δὲ ἡ κακία πως κατὰ τὸν τῆς φύσεως νόμον, καὶ οὐκ ἀχρήστως πρὸς τὰ ὅλα. Chrys. apud Plut. de Stoic. contr. 31, 32.

shall next touch a consideration or two concerning manner how, and the reason why, God did make the d; which will commend to us his doing it, and inti- some grounds of duty, and both direct and excite practice in respect thereto. The manner of God's pro- ng the world was altogether voluntary, and abso- y free; it did not issue from him ἀπροαιρέτως, without sel or choice, not (as some philosophers have con- d) by natural or necessary emanation or result; as from fire, or light from the sun, or shadow from a r; but from a wise free choice: he so made the world, he could wholly have abstained from making it, that

Sen. Qu. Nat. præf. et de Benef. 21. et Epist. 65.

Fecit quam optimum potuit, ait Plato in Tim.

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he could have framed it otherwiſe, according to an infini variety of ways[k]. He could not be fatally determine there being no ſuperior cauſe to guide him, or to co ſtrain him anywiſe; (to do, or not to do; to do thu or otherwiſe;) he could not be obliged to impart a perfection, being abſolute maſter of all things poſſibl and debtor unto none upon any account[l]: it is his priv lege therefore and property to perform all things κα βουλὴν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ, *according to the counſel of h will*, or according to his wiſe pleaſure, as St. Paul expre eth it; and accordingly we hear the Elders in the Rev lation acknowledging, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to r ceive glory, and honour, and power; for thou haſt creat all things*, καὶ διὰ τὸ θελημά σου, *and for thy will they a and were created:* they do affirm God's pleaſure to b the cauſe of his creating things, and they imply its bein ſo to be the ground of our due veneration, gratitude, an all devotion; theſe being tributes due unto free goodne and bounty: if he made all things fatally, no praiſe c thanks were due to him; if he doeth things ſo, there is n reaſon to offer prayers to him, to ſeek his aid, or implo his favour; no devotion toward him hath a ground, c can ſubſiſt. It is alſo evident, that if the world had bee produced in way of neceſſary emanation, that it ſhoul have been eternal; as if the ſun had been eternal, h light had been eternal alſo; if fire had been, its heat lik wiſe had been from eternity: but that the world was pr duced in time, not long ſince, within ſix or ſeven thouſa years, not only faith and divine chronology do aſſure u but reaſon alſo ſhews, and all hiſtory conſpires to perſua us; there being no plain monument, or probable memo of actions, beyond that time; and by what progreſſio mankind was propagated over the world; how, a when, and where, nations were planted, empires raiſe cities built, arts invented or improved, it is not very ha

Eph. i. 11.

Rev. iv. 11.

k Αἴτιον μὲν αὐτοῦ ὁμολογοῦσι τὸν θεὸν, αἴτιον δὲ ἀπροαιρέτως, ὡς τῆς σκιᾶς σῶμα, καὶ τῆς λαμπηδόνος τὸ ἀπαυγάζον. *Baſ. Hexaem. α'.*

Οἱονεὶ ἀποτελέσμα τῆς δυνάμεως. *Id.*

l Δοῦλα βασιλέων εἰσὶν, οἱ βασιλεῖς θεῶν, Θεοὶ δ' ἀνάγκης. *Philemon.*

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to trace near the original times and places. The world therefore in respect of time conceivable by us is very young, and not many successions of ages, or lives of men, have passed between its beginning and ours; whence it plainly appears, that it was freely produced by God.

And how he produced it, the Scripture farther teacheth us. It was not with any laborious care or toil; not with the help of any engines or instruments subservient; not by inducing any preparatory dispositions or aptitudes, but ψιλῷ τῷ βούλεσθαι, by his mere willing, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks; his will and word were, as Tertullian expounds it, the hands, by which it is said that God made the heavens; at his call they did all immediately spring up out of nothing; at his command they presently ranged themselves into order: it was not a high strain of rhetoric in Moses, as Longinus deemed, thus to describe the creation, but a most proper expression of that incomprehensible efficacy, which attends the Divine will and decree.

Adv. Hermog. 45.

Long. sect. 7.

But since God did not only make the world freely, but wisely; and since all wise agents act to some purpose, and aim at some end, why (may it be inquired) did God make the world? what impulsive reason or inducement was there moving his will to do it? We may answer with Plato; ἀγαθὸς ἦν, *He was good; and he that is good, doth not envy any good to any thing*[m]: his natural benignity and munificence was the pure motive that incited or invited him to this great action of communicating existence, and suitable perfection to his creatures, respectively[n]: no benefit or emolument could hence accrue to him; he could receive no accession of beatitude; he did not need any profit or pleasure from without, being full within, rich in all perfection, completely happy in the contem-

[m] Quæris quid propositum sit Deo? Bonitas; ita certe Plato ait: Quæ Deo faciendi mundum causa fuit? Bonus est; bono nulla cujusquam boni invidia est. *Sen. Ep.* 65.

[n] Ἐποίησεν ἀγγέλους, ἀρχαγγέλους, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας τῶν ἀσωμάτων οὐσίας· ἐποίησεν δὲ δι' ἕτερον μὲν οὐδὲν, δι' ἀγαθότητα δὲ μόνην, &c. *Chrys.* tom. vi. *Or.* 9. *ad Stagir.*

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plation and enjoyment of himſelf. *Can a man*, can any creature, *be profitable to God?* No; *our goodneſs doth not extend to him;* we cannot anywiſe advance or amplify him thereby; it is becauſe goodneſs is freely diffuſive and communicative of itſelf; becauſe love is active and fruitful in beneficence; becauſe higheſt excellency is void of all envy, ſelfiſhneſs, and tenacity, that the world was produced ſuch as it was; thoſe perfections being intrinſecal to God's nature, (for *God is love*, that is, eſſentially loving and good,) diſpoſed him to beſtow ſo much of being, beauty, delight, and comfort to his creatures. Hence, *The earth*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *is full of the goodneſs of the Lord;* that is, every thing therein, according to its ſtate and degree, is an effect of the Divine goodneſs, partakes thereof both in its being and in its enjoyments; and, *The Lord*, ſaith he again, *is good to all, and his tender mercies* רחמיו (or his bowels of affection) *are over all his works:* he is good, and tenderly kind toward all his works, as well in producing them as preſerving them; in freely rendering them capable of receiving good, as in carefully providing, and liberally diſpenſing good unto them; *That thou giveſt them* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt, ſpeaking with reſpect to the univerſity of things) *they gather; thou openeſt thine hand, they are all filled with good:* it is from God's open hand (that is, from his unconfined bounty and liberality) that all creatures do receive all that good which fills them; which ſatisfieth their needs, and ſatiateth their deſires: a glimpſe of which truth the ancient Pagans ſeem to have had, when they, as Ariſtotle obſerved, did commonly ſuppoſe Love to have been the firſt and chief of the Gods; the original ſource and framer of things [o]. But I will no longer inſiſt on this point in way of doctrine or diſquiſition; I ſhall only adjoin a little application.

Job xxii. 2. Pſ. xvi. 2.

1 John iv. 8, 16.

Pſ. xxxiii. 5. cxix. 64.

Pſal. cxlv. 9.

Pſ. civ. 28.

Ariſt. Metaph. i. 4.

1. The belief and conſideration of this point (that God is the Maker of heaven and earth) muſt neceſſarily bege

[o] Πρώτιστον μὲν ἔρωτα θεῶν μηδίσατο πάντων. *Parmenides.*
Ἠδ' ἔρος, ὃς πάντεσσι μιταπρέπει ἀθανάτοισιν. *Heſiod.*

ı us highest esteem, admiration, and adoration of God, and his divine excellencies, his power, wisdom, and goodness: for what a power must that be (how unconceivably great, both intensively and extensively, must it be?) which could so expeditely and easily rear such a stupendously vast frame? vast beyond the reach of our sense, of our imagination, of any rational collection that we can make? the earth, on which we dwell, divided into so many great empires, full of so many inhabitants, bearing such variety of creatures different in kind, having in respect to the whole but the like proportion, as a little sand hath to the earth itself, or a drop of water to the great ocean? What a wisdom must that be, how unconceivably large and penetrant, that could contrive such an innumerable number of creatures, (the artifice which appears in one, in the least of which, doth so far transcend our conceit,) could digest them so fitly, could connect them so firmly in such an order? What a goodness and benignity must it be, (how immense and boundless!) that did extend itself in affection and care, for so many creatures, abundantly providing for the need and comfort of them all! how transcendently glorious is the majesty of him, that was Author of all those beauties and strengths, those splendors and magnificencies we do with so much pleasure and so much wonder behold! Well might the devout Psalmist and divine Prophet hence frequently take occasion of exciting us to praise and celebrate the perfections of God: well might even heathen philosophers from contemplation of the world be raised into fits of composing hymns and elogies of its great Maker.

2. This consideration likewise may confer to the breeding of hearty gratitude and humble affection toward God; for that we are upon many accounts very nearly and highly concerned in this great production. We ourselves, whatever we are, and all we have, and all we enjoy; all our intrinsecal endowments, and all our extrinsecal accommodations are parts thereof, and did proceed from God; yea all the whole frame was designed by him with a particular regard, and from an especial good-will unto us;

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was fitted for our enjoyment and use: p the world made as a convenient house for us to dwell in, as a pl theatre for us to view, as a profitable school for c struction, as a holy temple for us to perform offic less sweet than reasonable devotion; for our benef huge orbs roll incessantly, diffusing their gloriou and dispensing their kindly influences; for our sake earth is decked with all that goodly furniture, and flo with all that abundance of comfortable provisions: these things out of pure benevolence, not being mo with any desert of ours, not regarding any profit of own, before any desire or any thought of ours (before were capable of wishing or thinking) God was pleased contrive, and to accomplish for us. *We*, said a Philo pher, *regard and esteem ourselves overmuch, if we th ourselves worthy, that so great matters should be agita for our sake* q: and the Psalmist signifies the same, wh

Psal. viii.

upon contemplation of the world, he saith, *When I co sider the heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon a the stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man that th art mindful of him?* That the Author of so great and gl

hat is our ſtrength, what our wit, what our goodneſs, what any quality or ability of ours, in reſpect to the perfection of thoſe things in him? how weak, ſilly, narrow, poor, and wretched things muſt we needs appear to ourſelves, when ſeriouſly we conſider the immenſe excellencies diſplayed in the world's creation! how ſhould this depreſs and debaſe us in our conceits about ourſelves! Eſpecially if we reflect upon our own unprofitableneſs, our ingratitude, and our injuſtice toward our Creator; how none, or how ſcant returns we have made to him, who gave unto us, and to all things for us, our being and theirs, our all and theirs; how faint in our acknowledgments, how negligent in our ſervices we have been; yea how prepoſterouſly, inſtead of our due homage and tribute, we have repaid him affronts and injuries; frequently oppoſing his will, and abuſing his goodneſs!

4. This conſideration is further a proper inducement unto truſt and hope in God; and withal a fit ground of conſolation to us in all our needs and diſtreſſes. He that was able to do ſo great things, and hath been willing to do ſo much for us; he that having made all things, can diſpoſe of all, and *doeth* (as king Nebuchadnezzar, taught by experience, confeſſed) *according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, ſo that none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?* how can we diſtruſt his protection or ſuccour in our exigencies? This conſideration good men have been wont to apply to ſuch purpoſes: *My help*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth*: well might he be aſſured, having ſo potent and faithful an aid: and, *Happy*, ſaith he again, *is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help; whoſe hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth; the ſea, and all that therein is*: happy indeed he ſurely is; no diſappointment or diſaſter can befall him, who doth with reaſon confide in him that made the world, and can manage it to his advantage. The Prophet Jeremiah begins his prayer thus: *O Lord God, behold, thou haſt made heaven and earth by thy great power and ſtretched out arm; and*

Dan. iv. 35.

Pſal. cxxi. 2. cxxiv. 8. cxlvi. 5.

Jer. xxxii. 17.

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there is nothing too hard for thee. The creation of the world is ſuch an experiment of God's power and goodneſs, as may ſupport our faith in all encounters; ſo that we ſhould not think any thing ſo difficult, but that God is able; nor ſo high, but that God is willing to perform it for us, if it make toward our real good.

5. Finally, This conſideration miniſtereth a general incitement unto all obedience; which from God's production of all things doth appear, upon ſeveral accounts, due and reaſonable: all other things do conſtantly obey the law impoſed on them, inſiſt in the courſe defined to them; and ſhall we only be diſobedient and refractory, irregular and exorbitant? ſhall all the hoſts of heaven moſt readily and punctually obey God's ſummons? ſhall *the pillars of heaven tremble, and be aſtoniſhed at his reproof?* ſhall *the ſea* with *its proud waves* be curbed and confined by his decree? ſhall *fire and hail, ſnow and vapour, and ſtormy winds,* (ſuch rude and boiſterous things,) *fulfil his word?* as they are all ſaid to do; and ſhall we be unruly and rebellious? we, who are placed in the top of nature, for whom all nature was made, to whom all nature ſerves; ſhall we only, of all things in nature, tranſgreſs againſt the Author and Governor of nature?

Iſa. xlviii. 13. xl. 26. Job ix. 5. xxvi. 11. xxxviii. 1. Jer. v. 21. Pſ. xlviii. 8.

But I leave the farther improvement of this grand point to your meditation, concluding with the exhortation of that angel in the Apocalypſe: *Fear God, and give glory to him; worſhip him that made heaven and earth, and the ſea, and the fountains of water:* even to him be all obedience, and adoration, and praiſe for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Rev. xiv. 7.

SERMON XIII.

OF THE TRUTH AND DIVINITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

EPH. i. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted), *having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*

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THAT our religion in gross is true and agreeable to reason, is a ground upon which the truth of its single doctrines and articles of faith doth lean; it is therefore requisite that it first be well supported, or that we be thoroughly assured thereof. Being therefore engaged at other times to discourse upon the particular points of Christian doctrine, which suppose this general one; I shall take occasion collaterally in these exercises to insist upon this subject; supposing in those, what in these we shall endeavour to prove; so both avoiding there such grand digressions, or the treating upon matters not directly incident; and supplying here what seems necessary or useful there to the confirmation of our faith.

Now in the words I did now read, St. Paul styles the Christian doctrine (and in many other places of Scripture it is also so called) *the word of truth*, (that is, a most true doctrine,) and *the gospel of our salvation*, (that is, a mes-

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ſage brought from heaven by our Saviour and his Apoſtles; in which the ways and means of attaining ſalvation, (that is, of that beſt happineſs which we are capable of,) the overtures thereof from God, and the conditions in order thereto required from us, are declared.) And that we have reaſon to entertain it as ſuch, I ſhall immediately addreſs myſelf to ſhew.

μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευε. Orig. l. 1. pag. 8, 9 Orig. vi pag. 282. Πίστευε μόνον ἄνθρωπε θεῷ ἄνευ λόγου.

It was anciently objected by Celſus and other adverſaries of our religion, that Chriſtianity did exact from men ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν, *a bare groundleſs faith;* did impoſe νόμους ἀναποδείκτους, *laws uncapable of proof,* (that is, as to the goodneſs and reaſonableneſs of them;) did inculcate this rule, μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ μόνον πίστευε, *Do not examine or diſcuſs, but only believe;* that it debarred inquiries and debates about truth, ſlighted the uſe and improvement of reaſon, rejected human learning and wiſdom, enjoining men to ſwallow its dictates, without chewing, or any previous examination concerning the reaſon and truth of them.

The ground of this accuſation was ſurely a great miſtake, ariſing from their not diſtinguiſhing that belief whereby we embrace Chriſtianity itſelf in groſs, from the

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: declares himself to understand it well, and heartily to prove it. Never any religion was so little liable to that nsure; none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at e bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men consider and weigh its pretences; yea, provoked them, r its sake and their own, (at the peril of their souls, and they tendered their own best good and safety,) to an ρίσιν, ἐξέτασις, an equal and discreet examination thereof. her religions have for their justification insisted upon e examples of ancestors, the prescriptions and customs times, their large extent and prevalence among mul- ndes of people, their establishment by civil laws, and ntenance of secular powers, (arguments wholly extrin- cal and of small validity,) declining all other test or trial reason: yea, it is remarkable how Celsus, and others ho made the foresaid objection, did contradict and con- ute themselves, affirming men ought without scruple to nform in opinion and practice to the religion prescribed y the laws of their country, be they what they will, ever so absurd or dishonest[a]. Δεῖ φυλάττειν τὰ εἰς κοινὸν κεκυρωμένα, (things established by common authority must be bserved:) And τὰ παρ' ἑκάστοις ὀρθῶς ἂν πράττοιτο ταύτῃ δρώμενα, ὅπῃ ἐκείνοις φίλον, (things are every where rightly done, eing done according to the fashion of each place.) Such vere the rules and maxims those men urged. And this vas indeed exacting irrational belief; a stifling men's rea- on, and muzzling their judgments; this was a method nforcing men blindly to yield consent to errors and nconsistencies innumerable. But the teachers and main- ainers of Christianity proceeded otherwise; confiding in he pure merit of their cause, they warned men to lay side all prejudices; to use their best understandings; in a

Hæ sunt religiones, &c. *Lactant.* ii. 6. (pag. 171.)

Orig. v. pag. 248, &c.

[a] Quæ omnia sapiens servabit tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam Diis ata. *Sen. apud Aug. de Civ. Dei*, vi. 10.

Omnem istam ignobilem Deorum turbam, quam longo ævo longa supertio congessit sic (inquit) adorabimus, ut meminerimus cultum ejus magis ad orem, quam ad rem pertinere. *Id.* 16.

—Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adora t. *Aug. ib. de Seneca.*

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case of such moment, to apply themselves to an industrious and impartial search of the truth: let one for the rest speak their sense: *Oportet in ea re maxime, in qua vitæ ratio versatur, sibi quemque confidere, suoque judicio ac propriis sensibus niti ad investigandam et perpendendam veritatem, quam credentem alienis erroribus decipi tanquam ipsum rationis expertem: dedit omnibus Deus pro virili portione sapientiam, ut et inaudita investigare possent, et audita perpendere: We ought especially,* says he, *every one of us in that matter, which chiefly concerns our manner of life, to confide in ourselves; and rather with our own judgment and our proper senses strive to find out and judge of the truth, than believing other men's errors to be deceived, like things void of reason: God hath given all men a competent share of wisdom, that they might both search out things not told them, and weigh what they hear.* So especially just and candid was Christianity in its first offering itself to the minds of men. It propounds indeed and presses, as evident in itself, the worth and consequence of the matter; but refers the decision on either part (so far as concerns every particular man) to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which to such purposes God hath indued every man. And that it can proceed no otherwise appears farther, from the nature of that faith it requires: it commends faith as a great virtue, and therefore supposes it both voluntary and reasonable; it promises ample rewards thereto, and so implies it a work not of necessity or chance, but of care and industry; it declares infidelity to be very blameable, and threatens severe punishment thereto; why? because it signifies irrational negligence or perverseness.

Lact. ii. 7.

Ἕξις προαιρετικὴ μετ' ἀληθοῦς λόγου, ἑκούσιος συγκατάθεσις. *Clem. Alex.*

In fine, Christianity doth not inveigle any man by sleight, nor compel him by force, (being indeed commonly destitute of those advantages; nor being able to use them, if it would,) but fairly by reason persuades him to embrace it; it doth not therefore shun examination, nor disclaim the judgment of reason; but earnestly seeks and procures the one, cheerfully and confidently appeals to the other. *Examine all things; hold fast that which is*

1 Thess. v. 21.

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ood. *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether hey be of God. See that no man deceive you. Be always eady, with meekness and respect, to give to every one that mands it of you an account of the hope in you.* These e the maxims which Christianity goes upon in the pro- gation and maintenance of itself.

1 John iv. 1. Matt. xxiv. 4. Eph. v. 6. 1 Pet. iii. 15.

Indeed after it hath convinced men of its truth in gene- l, having evidenced the truth of its fundamental princi- es, it then requires a full and cordial assent, without ex- ption, to its particular doctrines, grounded upon or de- ced from them. When, I say, it hath, to the satisfac- n of a man's mind, with solid reason made good its inciples; it then enjoins men to surcease farther scruple debate concerning what it teaches or draws from them; hich is a proceeding most reasonable and conformable to e method used in the strictest sciences: for the princi- es of any science being either demonstrated out of some gher science, or evidenced by fit experiments to com- on sense; and being thence granted and received, it is terward unlawful and absurd to challenge the conclu- ns collected from them; so if it have been proved and knowledged that our principles are true, (for instance, at God is perfectly veracious, and that Christian religion ith *his* authority, or attestation to it,) it will then be a rt of absurd levity and inconsistency to question any par- ular proposition evidently contained therein; and in this nse or in these cases it is true indeed that Christianity th engage us to believe simply and purely, doth silence tural reason, and condemn curious inquiry, and prohibit spute, especially to persons of meaner capacities or im- ovements. And thus, I take it, those Christians of old re to be understood, who so much commended imme- te faith, excluded reason from being too busy in mat- s of religion, discountenanced that curiosity which rched into, and would needs sound, those inscrutable rteries which our religion teaches. Our religion then l allow (yea it invites and exhorts) an infidel to confi- and judge of its truth, although it will not allow hristian to be so vain and inconstant, as to doubt of any

Bas. in Ps. 15.

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particular doctrine therein; ſeeing by ſo queſtioning a part, he in effect renounces the whole, and ſubverts the foundation of his faith; at leaſt ceaſes thereby to be a ſteady Chriſtian. I might then well invert our adverſaries' diſcourſe, and offer it as a good argument of our religion its truth, that it alone among all religions, with a candour and confidence peculiar to truth, calls us to the light, is willing, yea deſirous, to undergo trial; I add, yea challenges, as its due from all men, and demands it of them as a neceſſary duty, to hear it, to conſider it ſeriouſly, to paſs ſentence upon it; for as commonly error and groundleſs conceit, being conſcious of their own weakneſs, are timorous and ſuſpicious, and thence ready to decline all proof and conflict of reaſon; ſo truth, knowing its own ſtrength, is daring and reſolute; enters boldly into the liſts, being well aſſured (or hopeful) of good ſucceſs in the combat.

John iii. 21, 22.

Which proceeding, proper to Chriſtianity, is in itſelf very plauſible, and may well beget a favourable prejudice on its ſide; and that it is not confident without reaſon, will appear upon our examining the principles and grounds on which it ſtands. The firſt principle of Chriſtianity (common thereto and all other religions) is, that there is one God, (ſovereign and tranſcendent in all perfections; the Maker and Governor of all things.) The next (which alſo no religion doth not acknowledge) is, that God is perfectly veracious, ſo that whatever appears to be aſſerted, or atteſted to, by him, is certainly true; which principles (by reaſons I hope proper and ſufficient) I partly have proved, and partly ſhall hereafter upon occaſion ſhew. A third is, that God is the author of the Chriſtian doctrine and law; that he hath revealed this doctrine to mankind, and confirmed it by his teſtimony; that he hath impoſed this law upon us, and eſtabliſhed it by his authority. This principle (being the foundation and ſum of our faith) involves matter of fact; and conſequently, being not evident immediately in itſelf, doth (for a full conviction of a man's mind, and producing therein a ſolid perſuaſion) require a rational probation; and that it may appear we believe it like reaſonable men, not (as Pagans and

Mahometans, and those of other sects do[a],) upon wilful resolution, or by mere chance, as also for settling the ground of particular articles comprehended under this, I shall endeavour to shew the reasonableness thereof; advancing my discourse by several steps and degrees. I observe first, that,

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1. It is reasonable to suppose that God should at some time or season fully and clearly reveal unto men the truth concerning himself, and concerning them, as he and they stand related to each other; concerning his nature and will, concerning our state and duty, respectively: the nature and attributes of God, the nature and qualities of man, being compared, do persuade thus much.

It is apparent to common experience, that mankind being left to itself (especially in matters of this kind) is very insufficient to direct itself; that it is apt to lie under woful ignorance, to wander in uncertainty, to fall into error, to possess itself with vain conceit, to be abused with any sort of delusion, which either the malice of wicked spirits, or the subtilty of naughty men, or the wildness of its own fond passions and desires can put upon it or bring it under; it is consequently exposed to all those vices, dishonourable, hurtful, and destructive to its nature; and to all those miseries, which from ignorance or error, from vice and wickedness, do naturally spring; especially to an estrangement from God, and an incapacity of his love and favour. The two only remedies of all these mischiefs, natural light and primitive tradition, how little they did avail to cure them; how the one was too faint in itself, and easily lost in mists of prejudice from ill education and bad custom, prevailing generally; how the other (besides its other defects) soon was polluted, and indeed quite spoiled by adulterate mixtures of fond, impure, and vile superstitions, woful experience doth more than enough evince. We see, that not only the generality of mankind

[a] Μάθωμεν τοίνυν ὅτι πρὸς Ἕλληνας διαλέγεσθαι, ἵνα μὴ ὦμεν ὡς θρέμματα καὶ ἀνόητα, ἀλλ' ὦμεν παρεσκευασμένοι περὶ τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ἐλπίδος. *Chrys. in* 1 *Cor.* 17.

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did ſometime lie in this ſad condition, but that even the moſt elevated and refined wits (thoſe among men who by all poſſible improvement of their reaſon did endeavour to raiſe themſelves from this low eſtate; to reſcue their minds from the common ignorance, the miſtakes, the ſuperſtitions and follies of the world) could by no means in any good meaſure attain thoſe ends; for what did their earneſt inquiries or their reſtleſs ſtudies produce, but diſſatisfaction and perplexity of mind? wherein did their eager diſputations conclude, but in irreconcileable differences of opinion, and greater uncertainties than were when they began? Moſt were plunged into a deſperate ſcepticiſm, (a doubt and diffidence of all things;) none arrived higher than ſome faint conjectures on ſome unſteady opinions concerning thoſe matters of higheſt conſequence; ſuch notions as were not effectual enough to produce in them a practice, in any good meaſure, ſuitable to the dignity of man's nature, to the duty he owes to God, to the capacities man hath of doing and receiving good; from which due glory to God or much benefit to man did accrue.

Rom. i. 21. Eph. iv. 17. Ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς, *they were made vain* (or, they were fruſtrated, deluded, befooled) in their reaſonings and diſputes; the reſult of their buſy ſpeculations was, that *their fooliſh heart was darkened;* ſo darkened, that with all the light they had, they could not ſee any thing; at leaſt not clearly diſcern what chiefly it concerned them to know; *The world by wiſdom* (by all the wiſdom it could get) *did not know God;* did not acquire a requiſite meaſure of knowledge in divine things: did not however know him ſo, as to glorify him; as to thank him for the benefits received from him; as to bring forth worthy fruits of piety and virtue. So much St. Paul obſerved of them; and not he alone did obſerve it, but even themſelves were ſenſible of this their unhappineſs; whence ſo many complaints concerning the blindneſs and infirmity of man's mind, concerning the obſcurity and uncertainty of things, concerning the inſuperable difficulty of finding truth, concerning the miſerable conſequences from theſe, do occur among them.

1 Cor. i. 21.

Rom. i. 21, &c. 18.

—Hinc cauſa mali mortalibus ægris Naturam neſcire Dei.

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Now this being the natural ſtate of men, deſtitute of divine conduct and aſſiſtance; do they not (I pray) greatly need another light to guide them in this darkneſs, or to bring them out of it; a helpful hand, to free them from theſe inconveniences? and is it not reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that God, who is alone able, will alſo be willing in due time to afford it? He, who in nature is moſt benign and bountiful, moſt pitiful and gracious; whoſe goodneſs fills the earth, and whoſe mercy is over all his works; he, who bears to man the ſpecial relation of a Father, and bears to him a ſuitable tenderneſs of affection and good will; he, all whoſe attributes ſeem concerned in engaging him upon this performance; not only his goodneſs to *inſtigate* him, and his wiſdom to *direct* him, but even his juſtice in ſome manner to *oblige* him thereto.

Pſal. xxxiii. 5. civ. 24.

1. His goodneſs: *Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb?* Yea; though it is unnatural and unuſual, it is yet poſſible ſhe may, becauſe nature in her is not unalterably conſtant and the ſame; but the immutable God cannot ſo ceaſe to be mindful of, to be compaſſionate toward, his children. That gracious ear cannot hear mankind groan ſo dolefully under bitter oppreſſions; that pitiful eye cannot behold his own dear offſpring, the flower of his creation, lying in ſo comfortleſs, ſo remedileſs diſtreſs, without feeling ſome pity, without being moved to reach ſome relief; ſuch notes ſurely cannot be grateful, ſuch ſpectacles cannot be pleaſant to him, nor can he then forbear long to provide means of removing them from his preſence. We eſteem it want of goodneſs (yea an effect of very bad diſpoſition) not to direct a bewildered traveller, not to relieve, if we can, even a ſtranger fallen into great diſtreſs: and if we being in ſuch degree bad, are inclinable to perform ſuch good offices, how much more ready may we ſuppoſe him, who is goodneſs itſelf, (goodneſs infinite and abſolute,) to do the like for all mankind, ſo much needing his guidance and help! He who hath ſettled our outward eſtate in ſo advantageous a poſture, who hath made proviſions ſo various and ample for the needs and conveniences (yea for

Iſa. xlix. 15.

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the pleasure) of our bodies, would he have so little care over our better part, and leave our souls so slenderly furnished, letting them pine, as it were, for want of spiritual sustenance? How can we think his good providence defective in so main, so principal a part thereof? Thus doth divine goodness (to my apprehension) very strongly confirm our supposition.

Vid. Ezek. xvi.

2. And his wisdom enforces the same: God made the world to express his goodness and to display his glory; and his goodness who can be sensible of, his glory who can perceive, who can promote, but man? but he who is endued with reason, enabling him to reflect upon the good he feels, to admire the excellency he discovers, to render grateful acknowledgments for the one, to utter acclamations of praise to the other? which purposes yet will be utterly (or at least in great measure) frustrated, should God for ever suffer men to continue in such ignorance, doubt, or mistake concerning himself; if men are not fully persuaded that he made the world and governs it, how can they pay those due homages of dread to his glorious power, of admiration to his excellent wisdom, of love to his transcendent goodness? This grand theatre would, as it were, stand useless, and all the wonders acted thereupon would appear in vain, should there be wanting a spectator; should man be altogether blind or heedless; yea man's faculty itself, that his seeing faculty of mind, would signify nothing, were there not a light rendering things visible to him. Common sense hath dictated to men, that man is capable of shewing respect, of performing duty and service, to God, that also God requires and expects them from him; the same declares, that God best knows what kinds of service, what expressions of respect best please him. Reason tells, that God would have man act in the best manner, according to the design of his nature; that he would have the affairs of men proceed in some good order; that he even desires earnestly the good of men, and delights in their happiness: and if so, it is reasonable to suppose, that being most wise he should dispose fit means for accomplishing those ends; for se-

curing himself, as it were, from disappointment; that therefore he should impart to men a competent knowledge of himself, should declare his good-will and pleasure to them, should reveal both the best way of their serving him, and the best means of their attaining happiness to themselves. So divine wisdom grounds an argument for our supposition.

3. God's justice also seems not a little to favour it: every good governor thinks it just to take care that his subjects should understand his pleasure, and be acquainted with his laws; he causes them therefore to be solemnly promulgated, that all may take notice; if any of them by long disuse are become unknown, he revives the knowledge of them by new proclamations; to quicken obedience he propounds fit rewards, and deters from disobedience by menacing suitable punishments, knowing man's nature, resty and unapt to move without these spurs: and is it likely the sovereign Governor and Judge of all the world should observe less equity in his administrations? that he should neglect any means necessary or apt to promote his subjects' performance of their duty, to prevent the breaches of his laws? He that loves righteousness above all, he that so earnestly desires to be duly obeyed, he that infinitely delights in his subjects' good; can he fail sufficiently to declare his will, to encourage men to comply with it, to terrify them from transgressing it? will he suffer his laws to remain unknown, or uncertain; will he not consider the infirmities of his subjects, will he leave any fair apology for disobedience? No, the superlative justice of God seems to persuade the contrary.

4. I might add, that generally it seems unbecoming the Majesty Divine, that he should endure the world, his kingdom, to continue under a perpetual usurpation and tyranny; to suffer that his imperial throne should be possessed, his authority abused, his name insulted over, by enemies and rebels against him, (by evil spirits, whether those of hell, or those on earth;) that a cruel fiend, that a cursed ghost, that a brute beast, that a chimera of man's fancy should be worshipped, while himself is forgotten and

Acts x. 38
Eph. ii. 2.

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neglected, is dishonoured and despised; that iniquity wickedness (with all the filthy brood of ignorance error) should every where flourish and domineer, r righteousness and virtue lie prostrate, and are tram upon: this surely the King of Glory, the great Pa of Goodness, will not permit to be; sooner rather mag conceive, that, to remove these indecencies and these chiefs, he would presently turn the world into a desert solitude, or pour a deluge of water over the face of earth, or with flames of vengeance consume it into ash

We cannot indeed judge or determine concerning special circumstances or limits of God's dealing ter man in this particular; concerning the time when, manner how, the measure according to which, God dispense those revelations of himself: those depend u mysteries of counsel and wisdom surpassing our comp hension. That God should for a while connive at men's norance, and suffer them to grope after divine truth; try them, as he did the Israelites in the wilderness, b they would behave themselves in that state; to prove b they would use their talent of natural light, to make th sensible of their own infirmity, to shew them whence their welfare must proceed, on whom all their happi depends, to make them more able to value, more desir to embrace, the redress vouchsafed them; as also, to monstrate his own great clemency, longsuffering, and tience; that, I say, for such purposes, and others unsear able by our shallow understanding, God should for so time forbear with a full evidence to declare all his mind men, is not so strange or unlikely; but that for ev through all courses of time, he should leave men in so f lorn a condition, in such a depth of ignorance, such p plexity of doubt, such captivity under sin, such subjection misery, seems not probable, much less can it seem unp bable that he hath done it: it cannot, I say, in any rea seem misbecoming the goodness, wisdom, or justice of G clearly to discover to us, what he requires us to do, w good he intends for us, what way leads to our happine how we may avoid misery. This consideration, if it do

Acts xvii. 27, 30. xiv. 16.

Deut viii. 15, 16. Exod. xvi. 8.

Vid. Gen. xv. xvi. &c.

prove peremptorily that God cannot but ſometime make ſuch a revelation, nor that he yet hath actually done it, (foraſmuch as we cannot reach the utmoſt poſſibilities of things, nor are fit judges of what God muſt neceſſarily do; although to my apprehenſion this ſort of reaſoning, with due caution uſed, ſubſiſting in general terms, and not over preciſely applying it to particular caſes (implicated by circumſtances and ſpecialties not falling under our judgment) hath great force;) yet it removes all obſtruction to our belief, and diſpoſes us with more readineſs to admit the reaſons which follow: for it being not unprobable, yea, according to the reaſon of the thing, very probable, that he ſhould do it, we have cauſe with attention and expectation of ſucceſs on this hand to regard the arguments that pretend to prove he hath done it.

This is the firſt ſtep of our diſcourſe, at which we ſhall ſtop for the preſent.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIV.

OF THE IMPIETY AND IMPOSTURE OF PAGANISM AND MAHOMETANISM.

EPH. i. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted), *having heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.*

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THAT the Christian doctrine is what St. Paul here calls it, *a word of truth*, and did proceed from the God of truth, is the proposition we are endeavouring to verify and persuade. To that purpose we did first discourse, that it is very probable God should sometime clearly and fully reveal his mind to men, concerning matters relating to his own glory and service, their good and happiness.

II. I now proceed another step, and assert, that no other revelation of that kind and importance hath been made; that no other religion, which hath been or is now in being, can with good probability pretend to have thus proceeded from God; so as by him to have been designed for a general, a perpetual, a complete instruction and obligation of mankind. There have appeared but *three* pretences thereto; that of ancient Paganism, that of Mahometanism, and that of Judaism, (for the more particular pretensions of enthusiastical impostors have been subordi-

nate either to Christianity itself, or to one of those; and besides having found no considerable progress or continuance in the world, nor countenance, as it were, from Providence, are not pertinent to this consideration, besides that they are all generally disclaimed;) but that none of those three pretences are well grounded, I shall, examining each briefly, shew: (briefly, I say, for I need not insist on them largely, the matter having passed so many good pens, especially that excellent one of Grotius; however, it falling in my way and method, I shall offer what hath concerning it occurred to my thoughts.)

For the first, ancient Paganism; it did indeed (in the parcels thereof, or by retail) pretend to a kind of divine revelation; that it derived its notions and its forms of practice from the direction of invisible powers, given to single persons or places, in several ways, (by immediate apparition, by prophetical inspiration, by significant events or prodigies;) but it did not, nor could pretend to any one uniform revelation from the sovereign God, solemnly delivered and directed to all mankind; which is an argument, not only that those pretended revelations were imperfect and insufficient to the ends propounded, but also false and counterfeit: for we may well suspect those edicts which are clancularly set up in corners, and which run not in the King's name, nor are marked with his royal signature, to have proceeded from impostors or from rebels; especially if the matter of them doth not advance, but depress his authority; doth not promote, but prejudice his interest; doth not comport with, but contravene his pleasure, otherwise declared. And such was the manner, such the matter of those Pagan revelations. Put the whole body of that religion (if I may so call it) together, and you have nothing but a lump of confusion and inconsistency; of deformity and filthiness, of vanity and folly, little as may be therein tending to the reverence of God, or to the good of man[a]; to the promoting virtue and

[a] Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus, dum solos credit habendos
Esse Deos, quos ipse colit.— *Juv. Sat.* xv.

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goodneſs in human converſation, to the breeding love good-will in men toward one another, to the maintain juſtice, peace, and good order in ſocieties; much apt produce the contrary effects. It was not, I ſay, ever ſimple or uniform, one fixed or conſtant thing, b according to difference of place and time, various and m table; diverſely ſhaped and modelled, according to the fan and humour, deſign or intereſt of the ſtate that allowed the prieſts that managed it, and the people that recei it; a plain ſign, that (excepting ſome general ſcatte notions deduced from ancient tradition) it did wh proceed from human device, or from a worſe cauſe ſuggeſtion of evil ſpirits, abuſing the fondneſs and pr of men. Survey it, and what ſhall you find th but a bundle of idle, ill-contrived, incredible, and inco ſiſtent ſtories, (arguing nothing of truth or ſincerity, little of wit or diſcretion in thoſe who invented them;) those attended by practices fooliſh, lewd, and cruel; unworthy of human nature, contrary to common ſenſe and honeſty? Their worſhip (that of the ſupreme Lord being neglected, &c.) you will ſee directed towards objects moſt improper and unbecoming: to the ghoſts of dead men; men in their lives (if we may truſt the reports of their devouteſt adorers) famous for nothing ſo much as for vicious enormities, for thefts and rapines, for murders and parricide

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of folly, dedicating temples and offering sacrifices to gs even void of subsistence, to mere qualities and acci- s of things, to the passions of our minds, to the dis- s of our bodies, to the accidents of our lives. Who ld think any man could be so mad as to reckon im- nce, that odious vice; a fever, that troublesome se; or fortune, (that unaccountable name of nothing, h wise men so little trust, and fools so much complain among things divine and venerable? Can I mention thing worse than all these, which the degenerate ig- ance and naughtiness of man hath crouched to? Yes, th a folly of all most wretched and deplorable,) they med upon, they obeyed, they offered their dearest dges of life and fortune to the sworn enemies, as of d and goodness, so of their own good and welfare, the very cursed fiends of hell: whom, if they had not en extremely blind and senseless, by the quality of those s and mysteries they suggested, (so bloody and cruel, lewd and foul,) they might easily have detected to be

Such objects as these was their devotion spent upon, these they paid their respect, in these they reposed their fidence. And was such a religion likely to proceed from d? was it like to produce any glory to him, or any nefit to man? From such thorns, what fruits can we pe should sprout of good life, of sound morality? what ty toward God, what justice, truth, or goodness toward n; what sobriety or purity in themselves, can we expect ould arise from such conceits and such practices? Surely other than those which St. Paul describes in the first apter of his Epistle to the Romans, and in the second of e Epistle to the Ephesians, and St. Peter 1 Ep. iv. 3. which tory plainly shews to have been no slanderous imputa- ns upon Gentilism. If any good did appear in the con- rsation of some men who followed that religion, it is t to be imputed to the influence of that, but to some tter cause; to the relics of good nature; to the glim- rings of natural light breaking forth in some, and by ir precept or example conveyed to others; to the neces- y experience concerning the mischiefs of vice and advan-

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tages of virtue; or perhaps also to secret whispers and impressions of divine grace upon some men's minds, vouchsafed in pity to them, and others whom they might teach or lead into ways somewhat better than those common ones of extreme wickedness and folly: to these, I say, or such causes, all instances of practice in any measure innocent or commendable may rather be ascribed, than to that religion, which was much apter to corrupt and debauch, than to better or civilize men; for with what intention soever they were spoken, there was not much of real calumny in those words of Lucretius,

——————— sæpius olim
Religio peperit scelerata, atque improba facta.

But it is needless to discourse much against that which hath no reasonable patron, and which scarce any wise man, when it was in fashion, did seriously think to have had any truth or reality in it. Plato, you know, often inveighs against the inventers of those beastly fables in heathen theology, (upon which yet all the economy of their religious practice did depend;) Aristotle attributes the constitution of those religions to the subtilty of statesmen: there is none of the Fathers, I think, or any other disputer against heathenism, who hath more directly or earnestly oppugned it than Pliny hath. There was few, or none, of the philosophers, who did not signify his dislike or contempt of the vulgar opinions and practices concerning religion; what Cicero saith of one part, the wiser sort did judge of all: *Tota res est inventa fallaciis aut ad quæstum, aut ad superstitionem, aut ad errorem*, (The whole business was deceitfully forged either for gain, or out of superstition, or from mistake).[b] They did indeed, most or all of them, in their external behaviour, comply with common practice, out of a politic discretion, for their safety and quiet sake: but in their inward thoughts and judgments they (as by many passages in their writings doth appear) believed nothing, nor liked any thing in it:

Arist. Metaph. xii. 8.

Lib. ii. cap. 7.
Vid. Plut. de superst. p. 291.
De Leg. x. &c.
De Div. ii. p. 240.
Tusc. ix. 1.
Ep. 301.

[b] Hæc et dicuntur et creduntur stultissime, et plena sunt futilitatis, summæque levitatis. *Balbus in Cic. de N. D.* 2.
Vid. August. de Civit. D. lib. iv. 33. vi. 10.

they obſerved thoſe things, as Seneca ſaid, *tanquam legibus juſſa, non tanquam diis grata*, (not as acceptable to the Gods themſelves, but as commanded by the laws of their country.) And indeed this diſſimulation was ſo notorious, that even the vulgar diſcerned it; and therefore ſeldom the wiſer men were reputed among them the moſt religious, but liable to accuſation for impiety; and ſome of them, ye know, ſuffered extremities upon that score, who could not altogether conceal that contempt, which the vanity of popular ſuperſtitions had begotten toward them in their hearts.

I might add, that all thoſe Pagan religions did vaniſh together with the countenance of ſecular authority and power ſuſtaining them; which ſhews plainly enough, that they had little or no root in the hearty belief or approbation of thoſe who profeſſed them.

And thus much may ſuffice, I ſuppoſe, to declare, that Paganiſm did not proceed from divine revelation, but from human invention or ſuggeſtion diabolical.

I ſhall only adjoin, that the conſidering this caſe of heathens may be of good uſe (and to that uſe indeed St. Paul hath largely applied it) in confirming what we before urged, the great need of ſome full and plain revelation to the world of God's mind, in order to God's glory and man's good; as alſo it is of ſingular uſe, (which alſo the ſame Apoſtle frequently did put it to,) by the contemplation thereof, to diſcover our great obligations to bleſs and thank God for his great mercy in revealing his heavenly truth to us, from whence we are freed from errors and miſchiefs ſo deplorable; which otherwiſe, from human infirmity and the Devil's malice, we ſhould eaſily (and in a manner neceſſarily) have incurred.

That pretence was ancienter in ſtanding; but there hath, even ſince Chriſtianity, ſtarted up another, (Mahometaniſm,) which, if not upon other accounts, yet in reſpect to its age, and to the port it bears in the world, demands ſome conſideration; for it hath continued a long time, and hath vaſtly overſpread the earth: neither is it more formidable in its looks, than peremptory in its

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words; vaunting itself to be no less than a complete, general, an ultimate declaration of God's pleasure, ca celling and voiding all others that have gone before. B examining both the substance and circumstances there considering the quality of the instruments by whom, the times when, it was introduced; of the places wh of the people who first or afterward did receive it; manner of its rise, progress, and continuance; as also matter it teaches or enjoins; we shall not find stamped it the genuine characters of a divine original and author but have great reason to deem it a brood of most le and impudent cozenage. In times of great disturba and confusion, when barbarous nations, like torrents, overflow the world, and turned all things upside dow in times of general corruption and disorder in men's mi and manners, when, even among Christians, ignora and superstition, dissension and uncharitableness, impie and iniquity did greatly prevail; in a very blind and o scure corner of the earth, among a crew of wild thie and runagates, (such have those Arabians been alwa fancied and known to be,) this sect had its birth and fo

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ıge of falling in the way of barbarous people, void of arning and civility, and not prepoſſeſſed with other otions or any ſenſe of religion; who thence (as mankind naturally ſuſceptive of religious impreſſions) were capale and apt to admit any religion firſt offering itſelf, eſpeially one ſo groſs as this was, ſo agreeable to their fuous humours and luſts. Afterward being furniſhed with ıch champions, it diffuſed itſelf by rage and terror of ms, convincing men's minds only by the ſword, and ſing no other arguments but blows. Upon the ſame rounds of ignorance and force it ſtill ſubſiſts, neither ofring for, nor taking againſt itſelf any reaſon; refuſing all ramination, and, upon extreme penalties, forbidding any iſpute about its truth; being indeed ſo far (whether out f judgment or fatal inſtinct) wiſe, as conſcious to itſelf, r foreboding, that the letting in of a little light, and a ıoderate liberty of diſcuſſing its pretences, would eaſily verthrow it. Now that divine wiſdom ſhould chooſe hoſe black and boiſterous times to publiſh his will, is as f the king ſhould purpoſely order his proclamation to be nade in a tempeſtuous night, when no man ſcarce dared o ſtir out, nor any man could well ſee what was done, or ıear what was ſaid: much fitter ſurely to that purpoſe vere ſerene and calm day, a time of general civility and ıeace, like that of Auguſtus Cæſar. That the declaration ıf God's mind ſhould iſſue from the deſerts of Arabia, (that len of robbers,) is as if the king ſhould cauſe his edicts to be et up in the blindeſt and dirtieſt nook of the ſuburbs: the narket-croſs ſurely, or the exchange, (the place of moſt general and ordinary concourſe,) ıuch as, in reſpect to he world, was the flouriſhing empire of Rome, were nore convenient, and wiſely choſen for that purpoſe. That, paſſing over the more gentle and tractable part of ıis people, a prince ſhould ſend his laws to a rabble of anditti; ſhould pick out for his meſſenger a moſt diſſoıte varlet, attended with a crew of deſperate ruffians, reolved to buffet and rifle all they met, were an odd way of roceeding: to communicate his pleaſure unto the better nd more orderly ſort of people, (ſuch as were the ſub-

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jects of that well governed empire;) by persons o
meaning, mild disposition, and innocent behaviour,
as were the Apostles of our Lord;) in a quiet and
manner, (such as these only used;) would surely
become a worthy prince. Thus even the exterior c
stances of Mahometanism, (both absolutely and in c
rison,) belonging to its rise, its growth, its contin
(so full of indecency, of iniquity, of inhumanity,)
strong presumptions against its divinity; or rather,
demonstrate that it could not proceed from God,
truth cannot need such instruments or such cou
maintain it, whose goodness certainly abhors them
farther, if we look into the matter and inward
thereof, we shall find it a mass of absurd opinions, o
ries, and uncouth ceremonies; compounded chiefly
dregs of Christian heresies, together with some ingr
of Judaism and Paganism confusedly jumbled, or
fully tempered together. From Christian heresies it
to have derived its negative doctrines, opposite to
tianity; as for instance, when allowing Christ mu
spect, it yet denies his being the Son of God, and
did really suffer; rejecting his true story, it affixe
ones upon him: as also some positive ones; for ex
that unreasonable opinion, so much misbeseeming
that God hath a body, (Mahomet, forsooth, once t
his hand, and felt it very cold,) might be drawn fr
Anthropomorphites; that doctrine concerning th
determination of all events, (so prejudicial to all re
subverting the foundations of justice between G
man, man's free choice in serving God, God's fr
posal of rewards suitable to men's actions,) they pr
borrowed from the Manichees, a sect that mu
tained in those eastern parts. The Jew contribu
ceremonies of circumcision and frequent purgati
washing, his abstinence from swine's flesh, his allow
polygamy and divorce: I might add, that perhap
him they filched that proud, inhuman, and unci
mour of monopolizing divine favour and good-
themselves; so of restraining their own kindness

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2 to persons of their profession, or sect; condemn-
, despising, and hating all the world beside them-
es; calling all others dogs, and adjudging all to
nin damnation; and, which is more, affirming that all
their belief, how wicked soever their lives have been,
l at length assuredly partake of salvation: so partial
they make Almighty God, so addicted to a mere
se and outward shew, feigning him, as in shape so in
Sons, human and like themselves. Indeed in this main
t of religion, a true notion of God, his nature, his
ibutes, his method of providence, their doctrine is
y peccant, representing him, in his nature and actions,
y unworthily. Their descriptions concerning the state
men after death, (that main and principal part of re-
on, which gives life and vigour to the rest,) whence
we better deduce its original, than from the Pagan no-
ns or stories of Elysium and Hades? what better pat-
n can we find, whence that paradise of corporeal de-
ht, or rather of brutish sensuality, should be transcribed,
ich any man sees how poor an encouragement it is,
w unworthy a reward, to virtue; yea, how much it
apt to detract from, to discourage all performances of
son and honesty? The like we might say of the punish-
nts (which in due correspondence to the rewards they
pound) they only or chiefly inflict upon the body; the
in part, it seems, of which a Mahometan man con-
s. And must he not be very stupid, who can suffer
nself to be persuaded, that such conceits (conceits
ourable indeed to pleasure, and indulgent to the flesh,
t contrary to virtue, prejudicial to the spirit and reason
man) should come from the God of wisdom and holi-
s? Farther, how Mahomet was inspired, his stories
ne will evince; stories patched up out of old histories
rupted, mangled, and transplaced; interlarded with
nlous legends, contrary to all probable records of his-
y, (the names, places, times, and all the circumstances
ereof he most unskilfully changes and confounds,) yea
ugnant to the nature and possibility of things; so that
a manner every tale he tells is an evident argument

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of an ignorant and an impudent impostor; and he that blunders and falsifies about matters of fact, who will trust him in matters of right and reason? which things, if it were worth the while, might by various instances be shewed; and you may every where receive satisfaction therein. The like might be said concerning its multitude of silly ceremonies, grounded on no reasonable design, nor subservient to any purpose of virtue; the institution whereof no man therefore, without injury to the divine wisdom, can impute thereto. But I shall only add two farther considerations upon this matter: one, that whatever is good or plausible in this religion, (such as are some precepts of justice and charity, although these confined among themselves,) may reasonably be supposed taken from Christianity, which being senior in standing, may (in points wherein both agree) well go for the mistress; and however, that, upon the score of such doctrines or laws, we have no reason to think this religion came from God; for why should he reveal that again, which in a larger extent, upon better grounds, with more advantage, he had declared before; which also then was commonly embraced and acknowledged? I also observe, that this religion, by its own free concessions, doth evidently destroy itself; for it admits Christianity once to have been a true doctrine, proceeding from and attested to by God: but Christianity did ever declare itself to be a general, perpetual, perfect, and immutable rule of faith and practice; that never any accessions thereto, any alterations thereof, ought to be made or admitted; that whatever spirit, coming after it, should offer to innovate, or pretend to new discoveries contrary to, or different from it, must be suspected of delusion, foretelling and forewarning against such endeavours that should appear, as fallacious and mischievous: this, it appears, (by the writings of those who first planted Christianity, writings which no man in his wits can question to be theirs; being through a continual uninterrupted course of times, from the beginning, by general consent of both friends and adversaries, acknowledged and attested to as so; all characters within them imaginably proper for

that purpose, confirming the same; as also by the current tradition of their disciples, immediate and mediate, extant in records unquestionable, and by all other means conceivable,) this, I say, it most plainly appears, was one grand doctrine and pretence of Christianity at first, which the Mahometans acknowledging originally true and divine in the gross, must consequently grant itself to be an imposture. SERM. XIV.

And thus much seems sufficient to demonstrate that religion not to be of a divine extraction. I shall next proceed to consider the pretences of Judaism, and to shew that neither it was such a perfect revelation as we proved it probable God would vouchsafe to make. But that shall be the subject of another discourse.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XV.

OF THE IMPERFECTION OF THE JEWISH RELIGION.

EPH. i. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted), *having heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.*

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THAT it is probable God should vouchsafe to mankind a full and clear declaration of his mind and will concerning their duty and their welfare, I did shew: that Paganism and Mahometanism, without reason and truth, did or does pretend thereto, I also briefly discoursed: I now proceed to examine the plea which Judaism puts in, and to make good that neither it is well grounded, (which, as the cause deserves, I shall do somewhat more largely.) The Jewish religion we acknowledge had its birth from the revelation and appointment of God; its truth and its goodness we do not call in question: but yet looking into it, we shall find it in many respects defective, and wanting the conditions due to such a revelation as we require. For it was not universal, (neither being directed to, nor fitted for, the nature and needs of mankind;) it was not full and complete, it was not designed to be of perpetual obligation or use.

Heb. vii. 18, 19.

1. First, I say, this revelation was not general; not directed to, or intended for to instruct and oblige mankind:

itself expresly affirms so much; the whole tenor and frame thereof shews it; so do all the circumstances of its rise and progress. That it was intended peculiarly for that small nation, possessing a very inconsiderable portion of the earth; distinguished, and indeed, as it were, concealed from the rest of mankind both on purpose and in effect; for it so remained for many ages (till the Macedonian first, and afterward the Roman conquests opened the world, and disclosed them) hid in a solitary obscurity; even so far as to scape the observation of the most inquisitive surveyors of the earth, the most curious searchers into the customs of all people, (as of Herodotus for instance, who, nicely describing the places and manners of the people all about them, could not discern them, and takes no notice of them, although for their peculiar manners otherwise most remarkable, and deserving his mention;) appears by express passages in their law and holy writings; *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; He hath not dealt so with any nation; and his judgments they have not known them.* It is plainly affirmed, that God did make that discovery of his will and mind peculiarly to that people, and to no other; *I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine*, saith God to the Jews; *So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth*, saith Moses in his address to God; *Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; The Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth*, saith Moses to that people: which passages (together with divers others of the same import) being used to engage and encourage a singular obedience, do plainly say, that God transacted with that people singly and separately from all other; taking them on purpose, as it were, into a corner, at a good distance, and beyond hearing of others, that he might there signify alone to them his pleasure, peculiarly concerning them. Yea to this purpose, of maintaining a distance and distinction from the rest of mankind, divers of their laws were appointed; as not only the nature of such

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Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20.

Lev. xx. 26.

Exod. xxxiii. 16. They were not to marry, not to trade, to converse, &c. *Vid. Grot. in Evang.* p. 130.

Deut. vii. 6. xiv. 2.

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laws doth imply, but words annexed to them sometimes
express; *I am the Lord your God, which have separated*
Lev. xx. 24. *you from other people; ye shall therefore put difference be-*
Eph. ii. 14. *tween clean beasts and unclean.* Whence St. Paul calls
their law μεσότοιχον φραγμὸν, a *partition* wall, that fenced
that nation, and severed it from others; and an enmity,
being framed to set them in distance and variance from the
rest of men. That whole business also of this constitution
is frequently styled a covenant, *made*, not between God
Deut. iv. 13. and mankind, but between God and that single nation; a
xxix. 14, 25, &c. covenant in formal terms mentioning them, and them
only; sealed with marks and characters peculiar to them;
requiring conditions and duties possible or proper only for
them to perform; exhibiting promises only suitable to
them; propounding rewards which they only were capa-
ble to receive, and punishments which they only could
Deut. iv. 1. undergo. *Hear, O Israel*, is the usual style, according to
v. 1. vi. 3, &c. which those laws are directed; *I am the Lord thy God,*
Ps. lxxxi. 8. *which brought thee out of the land of Egypt*, is the intro-
duction to the Decalogue itself, (which among all parts of
that law looks fairest toward a general importance and
obligation; which yet is so specially directed, and is in-
deed peculiarly called the covenant between God and that
Deut. iv. 13. people; viz. *synecdochically*, as being the principal part
Exod. xxxiv. 28. directive of their duty.) In the body of the laws itself,
there is often made a distinction between them who were
Deut. xvii. 15. i. 16. bound to observe it, and others that were not; between
Exod. xxv. 46. *brethren* and *strangers;* between *Hebrews* and *aliens;*
Deut. xv. 3, 12. with duties suited and limited in regard to that distinction,
Lev. xxv. 47, &c. (as in the cases of *remitting debts, releasing servants, ex-*
acting use, and the like:) there are enjoined duties, which
Deut. xvi. 1. 16. others could not properly or decently perform; such as
xiv. 21, &c. observation of feasts in commemoration and thankfulness
Exod. xxiii. 19, &c. for mercies vouchsafed to that nation; as also others
which could not be observed by all men with any possi-
bility or convenience; such as those of repairing thrice a
year to one certain place, established for God's worship; of
bringing tithes and oblations thither, and the like; neither
was the number of Priests and Levites, set apart for God's

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service, proportioned otherwise, than in respect to that one people. The encouragements also and rewards promised to obedience do incommunicably pertain to them, as also the discouragements from, and punishments for, disobedience; a long and prosperous enjoyment of the land of Canaan was the meed set before them, if they should obey and make good their part of the covenant; a dispossession thereof, or affliction in it, was the punishment threatened, if they should presume to disobey and violate those engagements; *Ye shall walk in all the laws, which the Lord your God hath commanded you; that ye may live, and that it may be well with you;* and *that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye possess. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.* Such were the promises exciting to obedience; and the threatenings deterring from disobedience were answerable, as every where in their law and story is visible.

Deut. v. 33. vi. 3, &c. Moses novos ritus, contrariosque cæteris mortalibus indidit. *Tac.* 5. Cætera instituta sinistra, fœda pravitate valuere.

I may also hereto add, that as the laws and rites of this religion were designed only for this people, as they did only agree to their circumstances; so they were only fitted to their inclinations and their capacities; their inclinations, which were very stubborn and perverse; their capacities, which were very low and gross, as their own prophets do upon many occasions affirm and complain; being dissentaneous and repugnant to the common humour and genius of mankind: so experience discovered them to be, when they became more apparent and observable; *Judæorum mos absurdus, sordidusque;* (The *Jewish way of life is uncouth and sordid,* was Tacitus his censure; *Hist.* v. 5.) and, They run counter to all men, was St. Paul's imputation on that people; 1 Thess. ii. 15. to which the general conceit of men concerning them did agree; so little plausible or probable was their way, so liable to dislike and contempt: which argues it unfit to be commended by the God of wisdom to the generality of mankind.

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By which and many other like confiderations obviou enough may appear, that this difpenfation was not (eithe according to its nature or in its defign) general, or fucl as refpected the main body of mankind, but rather ver particular and reftrained; defignedly reftrained to the ob ligation and ufe of one place or people, if compared t the world of men, inconfiderably narrow and fmall; (th Deut. vii. 7. feweft of all people God himfelf fays they were.) That in fine, this conftitution had only the nature of a municipa law, impofing burdens and indulging privileges upon on city or territory; not of a common civil fanction, eftablifhed for the obligation, ufe, and benefit of the whol commonwealth, or empire fubject to the Almighty King.

It is not therefore in reafon to be taken for fuch a revelation, as we argued needful for us, and to be expected from him, *who*, as the Pfalmift, as reafon, as experience Pf. cxlv. 8. tells us, *is good to all, and whofe tender mercies are ove all his works;* from him, who is the common Father of all, and, as St. Paul expreffeth it, *hath made of one blood* Acts xvii. 26. The King of the world, the Judge of the earth. Rom. ii. Acts x. 34. 1 Tim. iv. 10. ii. 4. Wifd. vi. 7, 11, 23, &c. 2 Pet. iii. 9. *πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, the whole nation and commonwealth of mankind;* from him, who cannot be in affection anywife fond or partial, a refpecter of perfons or of nations, as St. Paul in the fecond to the Romans, and St. Peter in the Acts alfo implies. From him, who is not only the Maker, but, as our Apoftle alfo ftyles him, *the Saviour of all men*; and, as even the Hebrew Wife Man afferts, *careth for all alike;* being *defirous that all men fhould be faved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; not willing that any fhould perifh, but that all men fhould come to repentance.* From him, who is not only φιλεβραῖος, or φιλέλληνα, (a lover of Jews, or of Greeks;) but φιλάνθρωπος, a *lover of men;* and φιλόψυχος, *a lover of fouls;* who, laftly Tit. iii. 4. Wifd. xi. 26. Rom. iii. 29. Plat. Theæt. ἀδὴς θεὸς δύστους ἀνθρώποις. *is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles alfo,* a St. Paul urges this argument; and as alfo the reafon o the thing and the voice of nature doth declare: from thi God, I fay, fo difpofed, fo related toward us all, fo equall concerned in regard to us; fo impartial in his affection, f unconfined in his bounty; we fhould have reafon to ex pect rather no revelation at all, than one fo fcant, an

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inched in ſuch narrow bounds; ſo ill proportioned to the glory due to himſelf, to the need and benefit of mankind. We cannot reaſonably imagine that he ſhould contract the effects of his goodneſs, or the manifeſtations of his glory, to ſo ſlender a parcel of mankind, (no better qualified, no more deſerving ſuch ſpecial regard, than the reſt; as himſelf, to repreſs their fond conceits, and probably in way of anticipation, to intimate his deſign of farther extending that favour in due ſeaſon to others, who might pretend thereto with as much right and reaſon as themſelves, doth ſometime declare.) That he, who hath freely diſpenſed the influences of ſun and ſtars to all alike, ſhould cauſe the light of his heavenly truth to ſhine, as it were, but into one ſmall cloſet of his ſpacious houſe; leaving all the reſt, ſo many ſtately rooms thereof, encompaſſed with ſhades of ignorance and error; that he ſhould pour down the ſhowers of his bleſſings ſpiritual (otherwiſe than he hath done thoſe natural) upon one only ſcarce diſcernible ſpot of ground; letting all the world beſide (like a deſert of ſand) lie parched with drought, overſpread with deſolation and barrenneſs.

Deut. ix. 4.

Matt. 5. 45.

This revelation therefore was not in this reſpect ſufficient; wanting in its nature and deſign that due condition of generality and amplitude [a]. But

2. Farther; As this revelation was particular, ſo was it alſo partial; as God did not by it ſpeak his mind to all, ſo did he not therein ſpeak out all his mind. Our Apoſtle to the Hebrews chargeth it with blameableneſs; (*εἰ πρώτη ἦν ἄμεμπτος, if the firſt covenant had been blameleſs;*) with imperfection, with weakneſs, with improfitableneſs, (*ἀθέτησις μὲν γὰρ γίνεται προαγούσης ἐντολῆς διὰ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐτελείωσεν ὁ νόμος· There is made an abolition of the precedent commandment for the weakneſs and unprofitableneſs thereof:*

Heb. viii. 7.

Heb. vii. 18.

Gal. iii. 21. ἐ δυν. ζωοποιῆσαι.

Rom. viii. 3. τὸ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου, ἐν ᾧ ἠσθένει.

a Ἐπὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς ὁ νόμος ἔκειτο, ὅτι οὐ πολλὴ ἀρίστης πολιτείας ἡ ἀκρίβεια, ὅτι εἰσαγωγὴ τοῦ θείου ἦν, ὅτι παιδικὰ τὰ παραγγέλματα, ὅτι τὸ γάλα, ὅτι ὁ παιδαγωγὸς, ὅτι ὁ λύχνος, ὅτι ὁ τύπος, ᾧ ἡ σκιά. *Chryſ.* tom. vi. *Or.* 44.

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for the law made nothing perfect;) he means all this in degree, and in comparison to what was possible, and in some respects needful. Which charge may be easily made good, (*a priori,*) considering both the parts thereof which direct, and those which excite to practice; together with the means and aids enabling and facilitating obedience to the laws or rules enjoined; also, (*a posteriori,*) if we regard the fruits and effects thereof. Surveying first, I say, the directive part, we may observe both a redundancy in things circumstantial or exterior, and a defectiveness in things substantial and interior: there be ritual institutions in vast number very nicely described and strongly pressed; the observation of times and places, the distinction of meats and of habits, (*touch not, taste not, handle not,*) corporeal cleansings and purgations; modalities of exterior performance in sacrifices and oblations, those δικαιώματα σαρκὸς, (justifications of the mere flesh, that only concerned the body or outward man, and could not perfect the observer's conscience; could neither satisfy or edify his mind and inward man,) we see with extreme punctuality prescribed and enjoined, some of them under very heavy penalties, (of utter extermination and excision.) While moral duties (duties of justice and charity, yea of temperance and sobriety itself) and spiritual devotions (so exceedingly more agreeable to rational nature, and which could not but be much more pleasing to God) were more sparingly delivered in precept, less clearly explained, not so fully urged with rational inducements, nor in a due proportion guarded with rewards. Many things were plainly permitted, or tacitly connived at, (as polygamy and divorce, some kinds of retaliation, cursing, revenge; some degrees of uncharitableness,) which even natural reason dislikes, or condemns. So faulty was that dispensation, as to the part thereof directive of life; and it was no less in that part, which promotes and secures good practice, by applying fit excitements to obedience, and fit restraints from disobedience; rightly managing those great instruments and springs of human activity, natural courage,

Heb. ix. 9, 10.

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hope, and fear. Nothing ſo damps men's alacrity in endeavour, as deſperation or diffidence of good ſucceſs; nothing ſo quickens it, as a confidence or ſtrong preſumption hereof: and how then could they be very earneſt in endeavours to pleaſe God, who were not aſſured of (yea, had ſo much reaſon to diffide in) God's placability and readineſs, upon repentance, to forgive ſins wilfully and preſumptuouſly committed, ſuch as no man ſurely lives altogether free from? The not opening a door of mercy ſeems diſcouraging and apt to ſlacken performance of duty; what was then the ſhutting it up cloſe, the bolting it with that iron bar: *Curſed is he that abides not in all things written in this law to do them;* which at leaſt will exclude aſſurance, will quaſh the hopes of mercy; will conſequently enervate the ſinews of care and induſtry in ſerving God. Neither were the rewards of either kind (thoſe that ſpurred to obedience, thoſe that ſtopped from diſobedience) in meaſure or in kind ſuch as the reaſon of things doth afford and require. [b] They were only temporal, and chiefly corporeal or ſenſible; ſuch as belonged to the outward ſtate of this tranſitory life, which neither can deſerve much regard, nor are apt to have great efficacy: for who will in effect, why ſhould any man in reaſon, highly value the accommodations of this ſhort and uncertain life? who will, who ſhould be, greatly terrified with the inconveniences thereof? whom, probably, would ſuch conſiderations ſufficiently animate to encounter and ſuſtain the perils, the difficulties, the troubles, and the diſgraces, to which often the practice of virtue is expoſed? whom would they guard from the enchantments of pleaſure, profit, and honour, alluring men to ſin? the pleaſures of ſenſe, how improper an encouragement, how unworthy a recompenſe are they for the labours and achievements of virtue! incomparably better ſurely, more worthy of regard, and more effectual upon man's reaſon, more apt to

Deut. xxvii. 26. Gal. iii. 10.

[b] Ὅτι πάντα ἦν σωματικὰ, καὶ τῶν αἰρεσῶν λόγοι εἰδίοι. *Chryſ.* tom. vi. Or. 98.
Περὶ αἰρεσίων εἰδίωνες λόγοι ἦν, οὐδὲ μελλόντων μνήμη, &c. *Chryſ. ad Olymp.* 5. p. 60. Vid. tom. vii. p. 16.

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produce and to promote real virtue and hearty piety, are the rewards concerning the future ſtate of our immortal ſoul; which yet it is a queſtion whether that law doth ever mention; it is plain it doth not clearly propound and apply them. Indeed as to evident diſcovery concerning the immortality of man's ſoul, or the future ſtate, ſo material a point of religion, of ſo grand moment and influence upon practice, even the Gentile theology, aſſiſted by ancient common tradition, ſeems to have outgone the Jewiſh, grounding upon their revealed law; the Pagan prieſts more expreſsly taught, more frequently inculcated arguments drawn from thence, than the Hebrew prophets; a plain inſtance and argument of the imperfection of this religion.

I ſubjoin, God's not thereby (in an ordinary certain way, according to any pact or promiſe) affording or exhibiting ſuch interior influences of grace upon the minds of men, as, conſidering the natural frailty, blindneſs, and impotency of men, appears neceſſary to render them obedient to the rules of duty, to guide them in the ways of truth and goodneſs, to free them from error and ſin, to ſhield and animate them againſt temptation; is a main defect in that religion; apt to breed fear in the onſet upon duty, to nouriſh doubt in the performance thereof, to ſettle deſpair upon a fall or defeat. It preſented to men's eyes the obligation to duty, the difficulty thereof, the danger of tranſgreſſing it, but did not openly repreſent the means requiſite to perform it. And what can be more diſcouraging or diſcomforting, than to ſee oneſelf, upon great peril and penalty, obliged to that, which is apparently very hard, or, conſidering his ſtrength, impoſſible, no help or ſupport being viſible? eſpecially joining the conſideration before touched, that no evaſion by pardon, no riſe by repentance doth appear. Whence we may well infer, that indeed, in effect, this diſpenſation was what St. Paul calls it, διακονία θανάτου, and διακονία κατακρίσεως, *a miniſtry of death and condemnation; a ſubjection to a curſe; a killing letter;* bearing nothing leſs in the looks and language thereof, than certain death and unavoidable ruin; a lying under

2 Cor. iii. 7, 9. Gal. iii. 10. 2 Cor. iii. 6.

insupportable slavery, both to the guilt and punishment of sin. *If thou doest ill, sin lieth at the door.* SERM. XV.

Gen. iv. 7.

Neither in discoursing thus do we lay any misbeseeming imputation upon God, the author of that religion; the making so imperfect a revelation nowise being disagreeable to his wisdom, his goodness, or his justice. As for a time he might withhold the declaration of his mind to all mankind, so might he, upon the same or like grounds of wise counsel, forbear to declare some part thereof to that people: no special reason appears that could oblige, that might induce him not to be reserved, as well in part to these few men, as in whole to those, all the rest of men; yea, there be good reasons assignable, why the divine wisdom should be then so sparing of its mind, why God should only shew his back parts, as it were, to Moses, and *not let him see his face;* not discover all of his nature and of his pleasure to him; why then he should seem to delight in, to lay so much stress on those carnal and ceremonious observances; why he should forbear to exact that height of spiritual duty, and not draw men to compliance with the best motives of pure reason. A dawning of light perhaps more became that morning of times than a meridian brightness; that infancy of the world was not, it may be, ripe for a more deep and perfect instruction; that nation, however, to whose state, to whose disposition and capacity those laws and institutions were adapted, was very unfit for the highest and hardest lessons. For a nation it was (as from infallible hands we have it) not wise, or considerate; not grave, or constant; not meek, or pliable; but a very stupid and heady, a very fickle and humorous, a very froward and stubborn generation of men; *They are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding,* was said of them at first by him who delivered their law, or rather by God himself who enjoined it: and, *I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee,* saith the Prophet concerning *the house of Jacob;* alluding, it seems, to those many passages in

Deut. xxxii. 28. Jer. iv. 22. v. 4. Neh. ix. Isa. xlviii. 4.

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the Law, where they are termed *a stiff-necked people* uncapable thence both of the finest notions and the more rigorous precepts; like children, by reason of the grossness of their apprehension, and the unrulinesſ of their passion, they were not οἰκεῖοι ἀκροαταὶ, *proper auditors*, of a more pure and accurate discipline; wherefore as such the divine wisdom and goodness was pleased to deal with them; dispensing with the infirmities of their age, condescending to the meanness of their capacities, feeding them with milk, alluring them with petty shews, scaring them with frightful appearances, indulging them innocent trifles, pastimes, and sports; so tempering his ordinances as might best serve to keep them in good humour; to draw and entice them easily unto somewhat good, to curb and restrain them from mischief. Whence St. Paul calls those institutions with good reason *elements*; (*poor and mean elements*, and *elements of the world*; *rudiments of knowledge and discipline*, suited to the capacity of the first age, and the meanest rank; such as vulgar and silly people were fit to learn, and able to practise;) with good reason he calls the Law a *pedagogue*, that by instilling into those νήπιοι, (those *infants*, or little children, so also he terms them,) some imperfect notions of truth; by keeping them in some good order, did prepare them for a higher instruction, did predispose them toward a better course of life. Indeed, we may easily conceive that such variety of superficial formalities might well agree to childish and plebeian fancies; but to men of somewhat elevated minds, and well improved reason; of sound judgment, and large experience; who had tasted, and could relish rational entertainments, (and such in some measure and comparatively are men generally born and brought up in countries and places where civility hath obtained; at least they are capable of being so, fit means being used to render them so,) they must needs be insipid and disgustful. In the study of truth and practice of virtue, there are alluring beauties and sweetnesses; which it cannot but displease him, who hath seen and felt them, to be diverted from,

Deut. xxxi. 27. Exod. xxxii. 9. Deut. ix. 6, 13, &c. Psal. lxxviii. 36, 57.

Gal. iv. 9, 3.

Gal. iii. 24. iv. 9.

an obligation to attend so precisely upon such an SERM. XV.
ndance of petty, circumstantial, exterior observances;
be forced, I say, to chew such husks of things, to him,
o thereby must neglect so delicious kernels, cannot but
grievous and irksome. Wiser men are never much
cted with laborious and tedious pomps; they are de-
ned always to amuse children, and the common sort.
dd, that this dispensation was suited not only to the
ldish fancy, but to the slavish spirit of that people;
o, having in them little of ingenuity, or willingness
ly to do good, would be apt to wax not only dronish
lazy, but sturdy and insolent, had they not been kept
ler and inured to something of burden and toil. Such
wise men know to be the proper course of managing
ple of slavish temper; but toward men of a disposition
re ingenuous, tractable, and free, such as commonly
n civilized and well governed are or may become, such
roceeding were incongruous; they will either refuse
undergo such unnecessary burdens, or bear them un-
lingly; their obedience will be none, or lame, or un-
dly and heartless. God therefore dealt according to
dom with the Jews, when he imposed such burdens
on their shoulders, when he pinched their stiff necks
th such yokes, when he detained them in such fetters;
they were, and so they are truly called by our Apo- Acts xv. 10, 28.
s; burdens intolerably heavy; yokes very galling and Gal. v. 1.
ntious; fetters very strait and grievous; which they Gal. iii. 23.
sonably therefore reckon it a very valuable privilege
d benefit, purchased by our Saviour for us, to be loosed
m. But such a dispensation could not be convenient
r the rational nature in common, and for perpetuity: it
ther becomes God himself, who will not without need
ptofit vex his creatures; who cannot be fully satisfied
ith performances of so mean a sort; who necessarily
th affect services of a more excellent nature and im-
rtance; (those spiritual services of love, reverence, and
titude; of purity, righteousness, and goodness.) It doth
ot suit man, not being apt to perfect his nature, not be-
ng able to satisfy his mind. As he, by the improvement

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and use of his reason, will easily discern the small worth of such performances, so will he not readily comply with them without regret; but will soon apprehend the matter to be indeed, as St. Paul represents it, that an obligation to such rites is *a bond against us*, (ἐξαλείψας τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν, ὃ ἦν ὑπεναντίον ἡμῖν,) which in reason he may expect to be wiped out and *cancelled*; that a law consisting of such precepts hath an *enmity*, or repugnance to his nature; that such a dispensation is a *pupillage*, and a *slavery*, which he earnestly must desire to be redeemed and mancipated from.

Coloss. ii. 14.

Gal. iii. 24. iv. 1, 3, 5, &c.

Thus doth this revelation upon many respects, grounded on the very intrinsic nature thereof, appear partial and imperfect; and consequently not such as that which we reasonably may expect from the divine wisdom and goodness.

It is true, which some may deem an objection against our discourse, but I should rather take for a good confirmation thereof, that God did afterward annex some labels, as it were, to this deed; that he imparted by degrees farther manifestations of light and grace to that people, by the instructions, and by the exemplary practices of prophets and holy men raised up among them by his especial instinct and order; in a manner and upon occasions extraordinary. The Prophets frequently declared, that God had not much delight in those ceremonious observances; nor would accept them otherwise than as proceeding from good dispositions of mind, and as accompanied with practices of moral duty and more spiritual piety: that he chiefly did require of them hearty reverence toward himself, and submission to his will; strict justice, and tender charity toward their neighbours; meekness and patience in their behaviour; temperance and sobriety in all their conversation. By them also he discovered more of his gracious disposition, and of his merciful intentions toward them; that he would not be extremely rigorous in punishing the transgressions of his law; that he would not refuse pardon to the most grievous sins, not remain irreconcileable toward the most heinous offenders,

Isa. lxvi. 3. i. 11, 12, 13, &c. Mic. vi. 7. Hos. vi. 6. Psal. l. 8, 9, &c. li. 16. l. 14. li. 6, 17. Isa. i. 16, 17. lviii. 6. Mic. vi. 8. Hos. vi. 6. Psal. cxxx. 3, 4. Isa. i. 18. lv. 7. Ezek. xviii. 21. xxxiii. 12.

upon their sincere repentance and amendment of life. By the practices of holy men he also shewed, that the rigour of that ceremonious law was mitigable; that in some cases its obligation might be relaxed, and its observance dispensed with; that a service more refined and rational was especially acceptable to God; that he loved a purer devotion, a perfecter righteousness, a higher charity than such as the letter of their law prescribed. By them also he intimated, which their devotions plainly infer, that he not only exacted such duties, but was ready to afford them his assistance to the performing them; by teaching and admonishing them within; enlightening their minds, and inflaming their affections; directing, exciting, and quickening them to obedience. Thus did that morning of divine knowledge, from the first dawning, by degrees grow more lightsome; yet never arrived to a perfect daylight; the shadows were not quite dispersed; the whole horizon of heavenly truth was not disclosed thereby. Even those arbitrary and extraordinary dispensations of farther instruction are so many good arguments, that God did not primarily intend the Jewish law for a complete delivery of his mind; his reserving so much to be upon occasion detected, implied that more still might rest behind; accordingly, as indeed we see, that the future state, and immortality itself, was not by the Prophets fully brought to light; that the better covenant, established upon better assurances, was not yet revealed; that all means requisite for the glory of God, for the good of man, were not thoroughly provided for.

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Matt. xii. 3.

Ps. li. 6, 17.

Heb. viii. 6.

Heb. xi. 13, 40.

Of which conclusion we shall add this one farther probation, that Judaism did not serve, in effect, sufficiently to better men's lives; to qualify a competent number of men for God's favour, or for their own happiness; by disposing their minds to any tolerable degree of true sanctity, piety, and righteousness acceptable to God, profitable to human society, perfective of man's nature. It is a point that St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans insisteth much upon, and excellently applies to this same purpose. The Jews were highly conceited of their way, scorning the

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rest of men as altogether ignorant of God's will, and uncapable of his favour; but St. Paul represses their arrogance, by shewing the difference was not so great, as they imagined, between them and others, not even in those respects; for that the special revelation, which they were so proud of, had not produced effects considerably better in them, than the light of reason and the law of nature (means so despicable in their esteem) had brought forth in others; which charge being made good, it is evident they had no reason to prize their way so much; or to confide therein, as perfect; as thoroughly, in the best manner, and in reasonable measure sufficient to qualify them for God's favour, or to bring them into a state of happiness; yea, it is plain, upon that supposition, in some respects their way had the disadvantage, and made their condition worse than that of other men; rendering their faults more grievous and inexcusable, more provoking God's displeasure against them; especially seeing, upon the tenor of their religion, they had scarce any better ground to presume of pardon or impunity, than other men had from instincts of nature, from rational conjecture. Now that such a charge upon them is no slander, we need no other probations than what the continual stream of their own histories doth represent concerning their manners; than the many full and plain testimonies of their own Prophets concerning them; than the extreme punishments by divine justice inflicted upon them; than the common reputation they have continually had among men, grounded upon experience. What is their history but one continued tragedy, as it were, setting out the various strange rebellions and apostasies of that people, with the miserable consequences proceeding from them? What do their prophetical writings contain beside pathetical expostulations, severe reproofs, dreadful comminations of judgment upon them, for their prodigious impieties, iniquities, and lewdnesses; general in extension over all persons, excessive in degree, by no means curable or corrigible? *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem,* (Jerusalem, that place of universal concourse, the heart of

Rom. ii.

Jer. v. 1.

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that nation, the special seat and sanctuary of their religion,) *see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it*, says Jeremiah, v. 1. *There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof*, (of Jerusalem,) *like a roaring lion ravening the prey; her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things; her princes are like wolves; the people of the land have used oppression and exercised robbery: and I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none*, saith Ezekiel: and the rest frequently harp upon the same thing. But these prophets, you will say, lived in unhappy times; so circumstantiated, that no religion could have much prevailed upon men's minds and lives; such as make every religion liable to the same exceptions: well, but Isaiah, one would think, lived in better times; for how many better kings had that nation, that more strictly practised or earnestly promoted piety, than Hezekiah? yet, *A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquities, a seed of evil doers*, were they, it seems, even then; *the land was defiled under the inhabitants thereof; the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even to the head there was no soundness in the body of that nation.* Yea, when did that religion flourish in greater vigour and strength, when had it more advantage of exerting its best virtue, than in the peaceful and prosperous times of that great and mighty, that good and zealously pious prince, king David? yet, even in his reign, according to his own observation and testimony, *they were*, generally, *corrupt, and did abominable works; they all were gone aside, and were altogether become filthy; there was none that did good, no not one.* But we need not urge particular instances, since we have it so often affirmed in gross, that the manners of that people, from first to last, were constantly naught and offensive to God: *The children of Israel, and the children of Judah*, saith God himself in Jeremiah, *have only done evil before me from*

Ezek. xxii. 25—30.

Is. i. 4, 5, 6.

Ps. xiv. 53.

Jer. xxxii. 30.

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their youth. And again; *Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even sent you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them; yet they hearkened not unto me.*

Jer. vii. 25. xvi. 12. xi. 7.

The law, although by extraordinary persons, in fittest opportunities, with utmost vehemence and diligence inculcated and urged upon them, proved continually ineffectual to produce the fruits of piety and righteousness. The same you may see confessed by Ezra; and not only acknowledged, but evidently demonstrated by Nehemiah, in a punctual narration, deduced from the beginning to his time, in the ninth chapter of that Book. Again; The heavy calamities by divine justice so often inflicted, so long continued upon them; and, at last, God's so visible utter dereliction and disowning them, do also sufficiently declare what their deserts, and what their qualities have been; as also what good may ever be expected from them. For as God never punishes grievously without a proportionate cause, so he never quite deserts, but in a desperate case, when no competent emendation may be expected. He is not wont to lop off the branches, but when they grow dead and barren; he never cuts down the tree, while there is any hope of fruit. This providence therefore toward that people shews, that in God's esteem that law is to be laid aside, as an instrument grown useless, and unfit for his purposes; unfit to serve his glory, to further men's good.

Ezra ix. 7. Neh. ix.

I add; that through all course of times their manners have not procured in a manner from any men any goodwill or respect; but indeed the common dislike, contempt, and hatred of men: they have always (since well known and observed in the world) been reputed a sort of people not only above all men vain and superstitious, addicted to fond conceits and fabulous stories, but extremely proud and arrogant, churlish and sour, ill-natured and falsehearted toward all men; not good or kind, yea not so much as just or true, toward any but themselves;

(Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos; *Juv. Sat.* xiv.

Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, sed adversus omnes alios hostile odium.) SERM. XV.

Such are the obvious characters of them, such were their humours noted to be; humours not only implausible, but really blameable, deservedly offensive and odious; being contrary to the common sense, to the natural ingenuity of man. They have been long, as we see them now to be, partly for the vanity of their conceits, partly for the baseness of their minds and manners, and partly also for the wretchedness of their condition, the scorn and obloquy of all nations. Tac. v. p. 621. Vid. Grot. de Jure B. lib. ii. 15. 9.

Now the tree, which hath always bore such fruits, (so unsavoury, so unwholesome,) we have no reason to admire, to esteem excellent and perfect. It might be good for those times, when men willingly did feed on acorns, on crabs, on bramble-berries; but cannot so well serve now, when higher improvements of reason, when philosophy and learning, by a general influence upon the world, have prepared the palates of men to relish, their stomachs to digest, more delicious and more wholesome fare. But,

3. I proceed to shew the third defect, which I at first observed in this religion, that it was not designed for perpetual obligation and use. (As it was particular in respect of the persons to whom it was directed, whom it obliged; as it was partial and incomplete in its frame, so it was, according to its design, temporary and mutable.) This conclusion we might infer from what hath been said concerning the narrow extent, and concerning the intrinsic imperfection thereof; for supposing a new general and perfect revelation made to mankind, (such as we asserted probably should be,) that would naturally swallow and void those which are particular and imperfect; as comprehending them, it would render them useless; as supplying the defects, correcting the defaults, or removing, paring away the superfluities of them, it would discover them unfit for continuance. As rivers run into the sea, as shadows flee before the sun, so these small and shallow, these dusky and faint revelations would discharge them-

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ſelves into, would vaniſh before a complete and univerſal one. Nothing in nature or in providence that is ſcant, or defectuous, can be ſtable and laſting. Thus, I ſay, is this a concluſion, a conſequence of thoſe which preceded; but we have another more convincing ſort of evidence to prove it by, (moſt valid *ad homines*,) even by many pregnant intimations; yea many expreſs remonſtrances and predictions, that God did intend in due time to introduce a great change in affairs of this kind; to refine and reform the ſtate of things; to break open thoſe incloſures, and to remove thoſe bars of ſeparation; to enlarge the bounds of his dominion, and to receive all nations into the fold of his moſt ſpecial care and love. In fine, that he would diſpenſe a general full revelation of his mind and will, of his grace and favour to mankind; ſuch as ſhould not be conſiſtent with that particular and partial law, ſuch as implies a diſannulling thereof for obligation, and diſabling it for uſe. The holy writings of that people acquaint us, that God intended *to raiſe up another Prophet* (for extraordinarineſs and eminency) *like to Moſes, which ſhould have words by God put into his mouth*; (new words ſurely, new revelations from God; for why ſhould he with that ſolemnity be ſent to utter ſtale matters?) whom they ſhould, upon peril of their lives and welfare, be particularly obliged to hearken (that is, to yield attention and obedience) unto. That *the days ſhould come, when the Lord would make a new covenant with the houſe of Iſrael*, different from that which he made with their fathers after their delivery from Egypt; not to be written upon ſtones, but impreſſed upon men's hearts; in regard to which paſſage we may with the Apoſtle to the Hebrews well argue; *If the firſt had been faultleſs*, and deſigned to abide in force, *there would have been no place found for the ſecond*; and, that by ſpeaking of a new covenant, he antiquated, or declared his intention to antiquate, the old one.

Mal. iii. 1, 3. Heb. ix. 10.

Deut. xviii. 15, 18. Acts iii. 23.

Jer. xxxi. 31.

Heb. viii. 7, 13.

Jer. iii. 16. *That time ſhould be, when they ſhould ſay no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither ſhould it come to mind, neither ſhould they remember it, neither ſhould they*

sist it; they are the words of the prophet Jeremiah, concerning better times to come; wherein God *should give them pastors according to his own heart, which should feed them with knowledge and understanding;* but in a way, it is evident, altogether different from the Jewish institution; without any regard to the ark of their covenant, that seat and emblem of God's especial presence among them. SERM. XV. Jer. iii. 15.

That *another priesthood* should infallibly (for God swore so much) be established, not *after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek;* (not appointed to offer carnal sacrifices, but to impart spiritual benedictions.) Psal. cx. 4.

That time should be, *when God would gather all nations and tongues, and they should come and see his glory;* and out of them *God would take* (that which the Mosaical constitution would not anywise permit) *for priests, and for Levites.* Isa. lxvi. 18, 21.

That there should appear a *Zion;* a mountain seated above all mountains, (visible and conspicuous to all the world,) wherein God would place his perpetual residence, the seat of his worship, of his especial presence and influence, to *which all nations should flow,* or willingly resort, to learn God's will, and walk in his ways; which Zion could not be that literal one, long since desolated and disregarded; and which, however, did it stand in repute, could be no convenient receptacle, or resort, for all the world; it is surely another spiritual Zion, or mystical rock, which is prophesied of. Ps. cxxxii. 13. Mich. iv. 1, 2, 7, &c. Joel ii. 28. iii. 16.

That God will create new heavens and a new earth; (a thoroughly new world, or new state of things;) such *as that the former should not be remembered, nor come into mind.* Isa. lxv. 17. lxvi. 22.

That God would *pour his spirit* of prophecy *upon all flesh;* (although we see the prophetical spirit hath long deserted the Jewish nation, not so much as any pretence thereto remaining.) *That the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;* (Judaism surely is not this knowledge, which never did, nor is ever likely to fill the earth.) That *from* Joel ii. 28. Hab. ii. 14. Mal. i. 11.

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the rising of the sun, to the going down thereof, God's name should be great among the Gentiles; and *in every place incense should be offered unto his name, and a pure offering.* (In every place incense, acceptable to God, should be offered; not only at Jerusalem, to which the Jewish service was confined.) That a time was *determined to finish transgression, and make an end of sins; to make a reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy; and to anoint the most Holy.*

Dan. ix. 24.

That God would send him, so much needed and *desired by all nations, to whom the gathering of the people should be; the Sun of righteousness, arising with salvation in his wings; the Redeemer that should come to Zion; the Messenger of the covenant, whom God would give for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritage; the righteous Branch, to be raised up unto David; to reign and prosper, executing judgment and justice in the earth; whose name should be called, The Lord our Righteousness;* whom God *would anoint to preach good tidings to the meek, and bind up the brokenhearted, &c.* that is, in fine, God in due time would send the Messias, to enlighten the world with a perfect instruction; to reveal God's will, and declare his mercy to mankind; to erect a universal spiritual kingdom in the minds and hearts of men, reducing them to fuller knowledge and to better obedience of God. These places of Scripture, to which many others might be added, do sufficiently evince, that the Mosaical dispensation was in the design thereof mutable and transitory; that God intended, what the Apostle affirms effected by our Saviour, an abrogation of the precedent command, for its weakness and unprofitableness. Thus doth God's design concerning the abolition of this religion appear by verbal testimonies; the same we see also declared by real effects: his providence hath made good his word; he hath not only disobliged men from that religion, but hath manifestly discountenanced it; yea, hath disabled even the most obstinate adherents in opinion and will thereto from the practice and

Hag. ii. 7. Gen. xlix. 10. Mal. i. 3. iv. 2. Isa. lix. 20. xlix. 8. lxi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Isa. lxi. 1. Heb. vii. 18.

exercise thereof, according to its primitive rules and prescriptions. Long is it (for above fifteen hundred years) since they, exiled from their ancient country, and scattered over the world, have wanted a place whither to resort, wherein to perform those most weighty parts of worship and service to God, oblation of sacrifices, incense and tithes; their tribes being confounded, the distinction of priesthood and people seems taken away; all the mysterious emblems of God's special presence, all the tokens of God's favour and endearment to them are embezzled and quite lost; nothing is left substantial or solemn in their religion, which if they would they could put in practice: all that they retain of their ancient institution is the observation of some petty formalities, in matters of less importance; which also they have so blended and corrupted with impure mixtures of their own device and forgery, false and impious opinions, ridiculous and uncouth ceremonies, idle and absurd stories, that we may justly suppose genuine Judaism nowhere to be found; that it cannot be, nor is indeed any where, practised.

So that what reason shewed fit to be, what God had declared should be, that experience doth attest to be done; the cessation and abolition of that way of religion, both as to obligation and use.

So I pass over this second step of my intended discourse: that no other religion, excepting Christianity, which hath been, or is in being, can reasonably pretend to have proceeded from God, as a universal, complete, and final declaration of his mind and will to mankind. Such as we argued it probable that so wise a God, so just a Lord, so gracious a Father would sometime afford to his poor miserable creatures and children, the sons of Adam.

I have two great steps yet to take: one, that Christianity is in itself a doctrine and law endued with the forementioned conditions; in all respects worthy to come from God, apt to promote his glory, and procure man's benefit. Another, that it *de facto* did proceed from God,

SERM. XV. was atteſted to by him, and eſtabliſhed by his authority. Which propoſitions I ſhall hereafter, by God's grace, endeavour to prove.

SERMON XVI.

OF THE EXCELLENCY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

1 Cor. ii. 6.

We speak wisdom to those which are perfect.

THE meaning of these words, upon viewing the context, and weighing the scope of St. Paul's discourse, I take to be in effect this; that however such parts of the Christian doctrine, which St. Paul discovered unto those whom he began to instruct therein, *the milk which he gave the babes in Christ to drink*, especially as propounded, proved, and persuaded in so plain and simple a manner, without advantages of subtile reasoning or elegant language, might seem to persons really ignorant, unskilful, and dull of apprehension, (although much conceited of their own knowledge, wit, and reach,) or to men prepossessed with contrary notions and corrupt affections to be foolish and unreasonable: yet that the whole doctrine, such as it is in itself, being entirely disclosed unto *perfect men*, that is, to men of an adult and improved understanding, well disposed and capable, void of prejudicate conceits, and cleansed from vicious dispositions, would appear *wisdom*; wisdom, that is, not only exactly true, but highly important, and very well suited to the attainment of the best ends; even those ends, which it pretendeth to bring

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1 Cor. iii. 1, 2.

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about, which are manifestly the most excellent that any knowledge can aim at; the glorifying of God, and salvation of man: this I suppose to be St. Paul's assertion here; and thereof it is my intent, by God's assistance, to endeavour now some declaration and proof, by representing briefly some peculiar excellencies and perfections of our religion; which may serve to evince the truth, and evidence the wisdom thereof; to make good, that indeed our religion well deserveth the privilege it doth claim of a divine extraction, that it is not an invention of man, but, as St. Paul calleth it, *the wisdom of God*, proceeding from no other author but the God of truth and wisdom. It is indeed a common subject, and so the best ever should be; it is always profitable, and now seasonable to inculcate it, for the confirmation of ourselves, and conviction of others, in this age of wavering and warping toward infidelity; wherefore, regarding more the real usefulness of the matter than the squeamish fancy of some auditors, I shall without scruple propound what my own meditation hath suggested about it.

1 Cor. ii. 7.

Matt. xi. 27. —Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

1. The first excellency peculiar to the Christian doctrine I observe to be this; that it assigneth a true, proper, and complete character or notion of God; (complete, I mean, not absolutely, but in respect to our condition and capacity;) such a notion as agreeht thoroughly with what the best reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, ancient tradition doth attest, and common experience doth intimate concerning God; such a character as is apt to breed highest love and reverence in men's hearts toward him, to engage them in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him. It ascribeth unto him all conceivable perfections of nature in the highest degree; it asserteth unto him all his due rights and prerogatives; it commendeth and justifieth to us all his actions and proceedings. For in his essence it representeth him one, eternal, perfectly simple and pure, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, independent, impassible, and immutable; as also, according to his essential disposition of will and natural manner of acting, most absolute and free, most good and

benign, most holy and just, most veracious and constant; it acknowledgeth him the maker and upholder of all beings, of what nature and what degree soever; both material and immaterial, visible and invisible; it attributeth to him supreme majesty and authority over all. It informeth us, that he framed this visible world with especial regard to our use and benefit; that he preserveth it with the same gracious respect; that he governeth us with a particular care and providence; viewing all the thoughts, and ordering all the actions of men to good ends, general or particular. It declareth him in his dealings with rational creatures very tender and careful of their good, exceedingly beneficent and merciful toward them; compassionate of their evils, placable for their offences, accessible and inclinable to help them at their entreaty, or in their need; yet nowise fond or indulgent to them; not enduring them to proceed in perverse or wanton courses; but impartially just, and inflexibly severe toward all iniquity obstinately pursued; it, in short, describeth him most amiable in his goodness, most terrible in his justice, most glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence: whatever perfections in essence, state, or practice, either philosophers (by rational collection from innate notions, or from contemplation of natural effects, or upon observing occurrences in human affairs) or other institutions from the relics of primitive tradition, by politic reflection upon things, from other fountains, or by other means whatever, have by parts (imperfectly, obscurely, and faintly) attributed to God, all those our religion, in a full, clear, and peremptory manner, with advantage beyond what I can express, doth ascribe and assert unto him; not intermixing therewith (as other doctrines and institutions may be observed to do) any thing unworthy of him, or misbecoming him; adjoining nothing repugnant to that which natural light discerneth or approveth; but shewing somewhat beyond what it can descry, concerning God's incomprehensible nature and manner of subsistence, his unsearchable counsels of wisdom, his admirable methods of providence, whereby he hath designed to commend his

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goodness to us, and to glorify his justice; which sorts of truths exceeding man's reach to devise or comprehend as it becometh God (who so far transcendeth us in wisdom and knowledge) to reveal them; so they, wondrously conspiring with the perfections of God otherwise discernible by us, do argue or confirm the divinity of the doctrine, which acquainteth us with them: for a doctrine, how plausible soever, which should teach us nothing about God, that by other means could not be found out, and whose bottom common sense might not fathom, there were no urgent cause why we should derive it from heaven, or why we should not rather deem it the invention of some witty or subtile man. But such a doctrine as this, (which as it telleth us nothing about divine things, that contradicteth reason, so it informeth us many things, which no understanding of man had ever conceived, nor can penetrate,) we may justly presume to come from a superior wisdom, we must at least avow it worthy of God; in the contrivances of man's wit or fancy about things of this nature, as in divers instances it hath happened, most probably many flaws and incongruities presently would have appeared; they would have clashed with themselves, or with the dictates of common reason: that, for instance, God should out of his own bosom send down his eternal Son to partake of our nature, and appear in our flesh, that with utmost advantage he might discover God's will and merciful intentions toward us, that he might set before us an exact pattern of good life; that by his obedience and patience he might expiate our sin, and reconcile God to mankind; that he might raise in us a hope of, and lead us in the way to, happiness; this indeed is a mystery, and a depth of wisdom, which we should never have thought of, nor can yet thoroughly sound by thinking, which we better may admire, than we can understand: but neither doth good reason disallow it, nor can disprove it; yea good reason so far confirmeth it, as it cannot but admit it to import nothing but that which is plainly true and most credible, the immense goodness and justice of God; concerning which nothing ought to seem strange or uncouth

to us, since even by the care expressed in matters of ordinary providence divine goodness appeareth so unaccountably vast and high, that upon consideration thereof worthily might Job and the Psalmist exclaim; *What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him? Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him?* Job vii. 17. Ps. cxliv. 3.

Now thus to instill into the minds of men a right and worthy notion of God, is palpably a great excellency of any doctrine or religion: for beside that a true knowledge of God (even barely considered as in way of theory most perfective of our understanding, it being conversant upon the noblest object of contemplation) is in itself very desirable; and upon the same ground error in divine things is no small evil or defect; both these, such knowledge and such error respectively, are very considerable, as having a powerful influence upon action; for according to men's conceptions about God is their practice, religious and moral, very much regulated; if men conceive well of God, they will be guided and moved thereby to render him a worship and an obedience worthy of him, and acceptable to him; if they are ignorant of him, or mistake about him, they will accordingly perform services to him, or pretences of service, which shall neither become him, nor please him; (God by such misconceptions being transformed into an idol, their religion will become vile or vain superstition.) And since all men apprehend the example of God a perfect rule of action, that they cannot do better than to resemble and imitate him, such as they conceive God to be, such in good measure they will endeavour to be themselves, both in their disposition and demeanour; whence infallibly the virtues and defects which lie in their notion will exert and diffuse themselves into their life.

Isa. lxvi. 3. 1. 13, 14. Εὐλόγως τοῖς μὲν μοχθηροῖς ῥαύλας ἴχνη τὰς περὶ θεῦ διανοήσεις ἀνάγκη, τοῖς δὲ σπουδαίοις ἀρίστας. Clem. Strom. vii. (p. 511.)

2. A second great excellency peculiar to the Christian institution is this, that it faithfully informeth us concerning ourselves, concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, and final; points about which otherwise by no reason, no history, no experience,

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we could be well reſolved or ſatisfied: it teacheth us that we conſiſt of a frail mortal body, taken from the earth and faſhioned by God's hand, and of an immortal ſpirit, derived from heaven, and breathed out of God's mouth; whereby we underſtand the dignity of our nature and nobleneſs of our deſcent, our near alliance and our great obligation to God; and conſequently how it concerneth us to behave ourſelves, both in regard to God and toward ourſelves, in a manner anſwerable to ſuch a relation, worthy of ſuch an high birth and quality: it ſheweth us, that we were originally deſigned by a voluntary obedience to glorify our Maker, and in ſo doing to partake of joy and felicity from him; that accordingly we were created in a ſtate agreeable to thoſe purpoſes, wherein we were fit to ſerve God, and capable thereby ever to continue happy: but that by our unworthy diſtruſt and wilful diſobedience we caſt ourſelves from thence, and lapſed into this wretched ſtate of inward blindneſs, error, and diſorder, of outward frailty, ſorrow, and trouble: it acquainteth us farther, how being thus eſtranged from God, and expoſed to the effects of his juſt diſpleaſure, we are yet again, by his exceeding mercy and favour, put into a capacity of recovering ourſelves, of being reinſtated in a condition happy far beyond that from which we fell, by returning unto God, and complying with his will declared unto us; as alſo how continuing obſtinately in our degeneracy and diſobedience we ſhall aſſuredly plunge ourſelves deeper into an abyſs of endleſs miſery: it fully repreſenteth unto us, what ſhall be our future ſtate and final doom, how it ſhall be ſuited to our demeanours and deſerts in this life; what a ſtrict trial, what a ſevere judgment, all our actions (even our paſſant words and our ſecret thoughts) muſt hereafter undergo; and how, upon the reſult, we ſhall become either exceedingly happy or extremely miſerable for ever. It is indeed this doctrine only, which fully reſolveth us about this weighty inquiry, which hath ſo much perplexed all men, and with ſo much irreſolution exerciſed philoſophers, wherein the final end and happineſs of man conſiſteth, and what is the way of attaining it; aſſuring us

hat it consisteth not in any of these transitory things, nor s a confluence of them all, but in the favour and the njoyment of God, with the blessings flowing thence; hat this happiness is only by a sincere and constant obedience to God's holy laws, or by the practice of such a iety and such a virtue which this doctrine prescribeth, to e obtained. These most important truths, so useful both or the satisfaction of our minds, and the direction of our ives, this doctrine unfoldeth: I call them truths, and hat really they are such even their harmony and consistence between themselves, their consonancy with inferences from all sorts of principles, which we can apply for learning of truth, with what about these matters reason collecteth, tradition reporteth, experience doth imply, may well persuade us: for that man was first made and constituted in a happy state; that he was for his misbehaviour detruded thence; that hence he is become so very prone to vice, and so much subject to pain; that our souls do abide after death; that after this life there shall be a reckoning and judgment, according to which good men (who here are often much afflicted) shall be rewarded with joy, and bad men (who commonly prosper here) shall be requited with pain, the wisest men, upon these grounds, always have surmised; and their rational conjectures our religion with a positive and express assertion doth establish. So great a light doth it afford (which is no small perfection thereof) to the knowledge of ourselves and our chief concernments, the objects, next to God and what concerneth him, best deserving our inquiry and information.

3. It is a peculiar excellency of our religion, that it prescribeth an accurate rule of life, most congruous to reason, and suitable to our nature; most conducible to our welfare and our content; most apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the public benefit of all; by the strict observance whereof we shall do what is worthy of ourselves and most becoming us; yea, shall advance our nature above itself into a resemblance of the divine nature; we shall do God right, and obtain his fa-

As ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God. 1 Thess. iv. 1.

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vour; we ſhall oblige and benefit men, acquiring wi
good-will and good reſpect from them; we ſhall purch
to ourſelves all the conveniences of a ſober life, and
the comforts of a good conſcience. For, if we firſt e
mine the precepts directive of our practice in relation
God, what can be more juſt, or comely, or pleaſant
beneficial to us, than are thoſe duties of piety, which
religion doth enjoin? What can be more fit, than
we ſhould moſt highly eſteem and honour him, wh
moſt excellent? that we ſhould bear moſt hearty affect
to him, who is in himſelf moſt good, and moſt benef
to us? that we ſhould have a moſt awful dread of h
who is ſo infinitely powerful, holy, and juſt? that
ſhould be very grateful unto him from whom we have
ceived our being, with all the comforts and convenien
thereof? that we ſhould entirely truſt and hope in h
who can do what he will, and will do whatever in re
we can expect from his goodneſs, and can never fail
perform what he hath promiſed? that we ſhould re
all obedience and obſervance to him, whoſe children, a
ſervants, whoſe ſubjects we are born; by whoſe

heads, and of joys into our hearts; whence our obligation to these duties is not only reasonable, but very desirable. SERM. XVI.

Consider we next the precepts by which our religion doth regulate our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren; (so it styleth all men, intimating thence the duties it requireth us to perform toward them;) and what directions in that kind can be imagined comparably so good, so useful, as those which the Gospel affordeth? An honest Pagan historian saith of the Christian profession, that *nil nisi justum suadet et lene*; the which is a true, though not full character thereof. It enjoineth us, that we should sincerely and tenderly love one another, should earnestly desire and delight in each other's good, should heartily sympathize with all the evils and sorrows of our brethren, should be ready to yield them all the help and comfort we are able, being willing to part with our substance, our ease, our pleasure, for their benefit or succour; not confining this our charity to any sorts of men, particularly related or affected toward us, but, in conformity to our heavenly Father's boundless goodness, extending it to all; that we should mutually bear one another's burdens, and bear with one another's infirmities, mildly resent and freely remit all injuries, all discourtesies done unto us; retaining no grudge in our hearts, executing no revenge, but requiting them with good wishes and good deeds. It chargeth us to be quiet and orderly in our stations, diligent in our callings, veracious in our words, upright in our dealings, observant of our relations, obedient and respectful toward our superiors, meek and gentle to our inferiors; modest and lowly, ingenuous and compliant in our conversation, candid and benign in our censures, innocent and inoffensive, yea courteous and obliging, in all our behaviour toward all persons. It commandeth us to rot out of our hearts all spite and rancour, all envy and malignity, all pride and haughtiness, all evil suspicion and jealousy; to restrain our tongue from all slander, all detraction, all reviling, all bitter and harsh language; to banish from our practice whatever may injure, may hurt,

Am. Marc. l. 22.

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may needleſsly vex or trouble our neighbour. It engageth us to prefer the public good before any private convenience, before our own opinion or humour, our credit or fame, our profit or advantage, our eaſe or pleaſure; rather diſcarding a leſs good from ourſelves, than depriving others of a greater. Now who can number or eſtimate the benefits that ſpring from the practice of theſe duties, either to the man that obſerveth them, or to all men in common? *O divineſt Chriſtian charity, who tongue can worthily deſcribe thy moſt heavenly beauty thy incomparable ſweetneſs, thy more than royal clemency and bounty? how nobly doſt thou enlarge our minds beyond the narrow ſphere of ſelf and private regard into an univerſal care and complacence, making every man ourſelf, and all concernments to be ours! how doſt thou entitle us unto, how doſt thou inveſt us in, all the goods imaginable; doſt enrich us with the wealth doſt prefer us with the honour, doſt adorn us with the wiſdom and the virtue, doſt bleſs us with all proſperity of the world, whilſt all our neighbour's good, by our rejoicing therein, becometh our own! how doſt thou

men would but hearken to thy mild ſuggeſtions! what a paradiſe would this world then become, in compariſon to what it now is, where thy good precepts and advices being neglected, uncharitable paſſions and unjuſt deſires are predominant! how excellent then is that doctrine, which brought thee down from heaven, and, would but men embrace thee, the peace and joy of heaven with thee! SERM. XVI.

If we farther ſurvey the laws and directions which our religion preſcribeth concerning the particular management of our ſouls and bodies in their reſpective actions and enjoyments, we ſhall alſo find, that nothing could be deviſed more worthy of us, more agreeable to reaſon, more productive of our welfare and our content. It obligeth us to preſerve unto our reaſon its natural prerogative, or due empire in our ſouls, and over our bodies, not to ſuffer the brutiſh part to uſurp and domineer over us; that we be not ſwayed down by this earthy lump, not enſlaved to bodily temper, not tranſported with tumultuary humours, not deluded by vain fancy; that neither inward propenſions nor impreſſions from without be able to ſeduce us to that which is unworthy of us, or miſchievous to us. It enjoineth us to have ſober and moderate thoughts concerning ourſelves, ſuitable to our total dependence upon God, to our natural meanneſs and weakneſs, to our ſinful inclinations, to the guilt we have contracted in our lives; that therefore we be not puffed up with ſelf-conceit, or vain confidence in ourſelves, or in any thing about us; (any wealth, honour, or proſperity.) It directeth us alſo to compoſe our minds into a calm, ſerene, and cheerful ſtate; that we be not eaſily diſtempered with anger, or diſtracted with care, or overborne with grief, or diſturbed with any accident befalling us; but that we be content in every condition, and entertain patiently all events, yea, accept joyfully from God's hand whatever he reacheth to us. It commandeth us to reſtrain our appetites, to be temperate in all our enjoyments, to abſtain from all irregular pleaſures, which are baſe in kind, or exceſſive in degree; which may corrupt our minds, or impair our health, or endamage our eſtate, or ſtain our good name,

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or prejudice our peace or repose: it doth not prohibit us the use of any creature, whence we may receive innocent convenience or delight, but indulgeth us a prudent and sober use of them all, with the sense of God's goodness, and thankfulness to him, who bestoweth them upon us. Our religion also farther ordereth us (so far as our necessary occasions or duties permit) to sequester and elevate our minds from these low and transitory things, from the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world; things indeed unworthy the attention, unworthy the affection of an heaven-born and immortal spirit; that we should fix our thoughts, our desires, our endeavours upon objects most worthy of them, objects high and heavenly, pure and spiritual, infinitely stable and durable; *not to love the world, and the things therein; to be careful for nothing, but to cast all our care upon God's* providence; *not* to *labour for the meat that perisheth, not* to *trust in uncertain riches;* to have our treasure, our heart, our hope, our conversation above in heaven. Such directions our religion prescribeth; by compliance with which, if man be at all capable of being happy, assuredly his happiness must be attained; for that no present enjoyment can render a man happy, all experience proclaimeth; the restless motions we continually see, the woful complaints we daily hear, do manifestly demonstrate.

And who seeth not the great benefits and the goodly fruits accruing from observance of these laws and rules? Who discerneth not the admirable consent of all these particular injunctions in our religion with that general one, *Whatever things are true, whatever things are just, whatever things are honest, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, that we should mind such things,* and practise them? Such, and far more excellent than I am able to describe, is the rule of Christian practice; a rule in perfection, in beauty, in efficacy far surpassing all other rules; productive of a goodness more complete, more lovely, more sprightful than any other

Vid. Grot. de Veritate, iv. 12.

Phil. iv. 8.

doctrine or institution hath been or can be able to bring forth; much exceeding, not only *the righteousness of blind Pharisees*, but all the virtue of the most sage [b] philosophers; somewhat in part concurrent therewith philosophy hath descried and delivered; (it is no wonder it should, since all of it is so plainly consonant to reason;) yet what philosophy hath in this kind afforded, is in truth, if compared with what our religion teacheth, exceedingly meagre, languid, and flat: two words here, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself*, do signify more, do contain in them more sense and savour, to the judgment and relish of a well disposed mind, than the Ethics of Aristotle, the Offices of Cicero, the Precepts and Dissertations of Epictetus, the many other volumes of philosophical morality all put together; in matter our rule is far more rich and full, more sweet and sapid than theirs; in force and efficacy it doth also (as we shall hereafter see) far excel them [c].

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4. We may hereto annex this consideration, which may pass for another peculiar advantage of our religion, that as it delivereth so excellent and perfect a rule of life, so it delivereth it unto us pure from any allay embasing, free of any clog encumbering it; for that it chiefly, and in a manner only requireth of us a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties, plainly necessary or profitable; not withdrawing us from

[b] Τί ἂν τις εἴποι τῶν προσταγμάτων τὴν φιλοσοφίαν, τῶν οὐρανίων νόμων τὴν ἀρετὴν, τῆς ἀγγελικῆς πολιτείας τὴν εὐταξίαν; τοιοῦτον γὰρ ἡμῖν εἰσηγήσατο βίον, τοιούτους ἡμῖν ἔθηκε νόμους, τοιαύτην κατεστήσατο πολιτείαν, ὡς τοὺς τούτοις χρωμένους ἀγγέλους εὐθέως γίνεσθαι, καὶ ἀμείνους θεῷ κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν ἡμετέραν. *Chrys. in Joh.* i. 14.

Ὅσα παρὰ τοῖς καλῶς εἴρηται, Χριστιανῶν ἐστι. *Just. M. Apol.* 1.

Vid. Lud. Viv. in Aug. de Civ. D. x. 4.

Quæ disputationes, quæ literæ quorumlibet philosophorum, quæ leges quarumlibet civitatum duobus præceptis, ex quibus Christus dicit totam legem prophetasque pendere, ullo modo sint comparandæ? *Aug. Epist.* iii. *ad Valer.*

Vid. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 19.

[c] Δηλῶν ἐθέλει τοῦτο τὸ Χριστιανοῦ, ἄνδρα διὰ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ γνώσεως καὶ διδασκαλίας, σωφροσύνῃ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ, καρτερίᾳ τε βίου καὶ ἀρετῆς ἀνδρείᾳ, εὐσεβείας τε μελετῇ ἑνὶ καὶ μόνῳ τῷ ἐπὶ πάντων θεῷ διακρίνειν. *Euseb. Hist.* i. 4.

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the practice of solid piety and virtue by obligations to a tedious observance of many external rites; not spending the vigour of our minds upon superficial formalities, (or *busy scrupulosities*, as Tertullian termeth them[d],) such as serve only to amuse childish fancies, or to depress slavish spirits. It supposeth us men, men of good understanding and ingenuous disposition, and dealeth with us as such; and much more such it rendereth us, if we comply therewith. The ritual observances it enjoineth are as few in number, in nature simple and easy to perform, so evidently reasonable, very decent, and very useful; apt to instruct us in, able to excite us unto, the practice of most wholesome duties: which consideration sheweth this doctrine to be complete, suitable to the most adult age and best constitution, to the most ripe and improved capacities of man. But farther,

5. Our religion hath also this especial advantage, that it setteth before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice; wherein we have all its precepts compacted as it were into one body, and at once exposed to our view. Example yieldeth the most compendious instruction, together with the most efficacious incitement to action; but never was there or could be any example in either respect comparable to this; never was any so thoroughly perfect in itself, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for imitation, or so forcibly engaging thereto, as this: there is not one flaw, one spot, one false or uneven stroke in all this copy, so that we are secure from doing amiss in transcribing any part thereof; it was intended to conduct us through all the parts of duty,

Longum est iter per præcepta, breve et efficax per exempla. *Sen.*

[d] Negotiosæ scrupulositates. *Tertull. in Marc.* 2.

Quædam pauca eademque factu facillima, et intellectu augustissima, et observatione castissima Dominus, et Apostolica tradidit disciplina, sicuti est baptismi sacramentum, et celebratio corporis et sanguinis Domini. *Aug. de Doct. Chr.* iii. 9.

Dominus noster Jesus Christus leni jugo nos subdidit, et sarcinæ levi; unde sacramentis numero paucissimis, significatione præstantissimis societatem novi populi colligavit; sicuti est Baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communicatio corporis et sanguinis ipsius, et siquid aliud in Scripturis canonicis commendatur. *Aug. Ep.* 118. *ad Januar.*

especially those which are most high and difficult to our frail and decayed nature, general charity, self-denial, humility, and patience: it was admirably squared for the imitation of all men, the person in whom it shined being, as it were, indefinite, and unrestrained to any single condition; he being in right and power superior to the greatest princes, though according to choice and in outward parts inferior to the meanest subjects; having under his command the largest wealth, although enjoying none; being able readily to procure to himself what glory and respect he pleased, yet pleasing to pass obscure and disregarded; so teaching those of highest rank to be sober and condescensive, those of lowest degree to be patient and content in their respective states; teaching all men not to rest in, nor much to regard, these present things, but singly in all their doings above all things to seek God's honour, with main resolution and diligence to prosecute his service: and as to all degrees, so to all capacities, was his practice suited, being neither austere nor remiss, formal nor singular, careless nor boisterous; but in a moderate, even, and uniform course so tempered, that persons of all callings and all complexions easily might follow him in the practice of all true righteousness, in the performance of all substantial duties toward God and toward man. It is also an example attended with the greatest obligations and inducements to follow it; the great excellency and high dignity of the person, being the most holy, first-born Son of God, heir of eternal majesty; our manifold relations to him, being our Lord and Master, our best friend, our most gracious Redeemer; the many inestimable benefits received by us from him, all that redemption from extreme misery, and capacity of perfect happiness do import, are so many potent arguments engaging us to imitate him.

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6. Farther, our religion doth not only thus truly and fully acquaint us with our duty; but, which is another peculiar virtue thereof, it buildeth our duty upon most solid grounds, presseth it with most valid inducements, frameth it from the best principles, and driveth it to the best ends: no philosophy can in any measure represent

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virtue ſo truly eſtimable and eligible, can aſſign ſo wel and cogent reaſon why we ſhould embrace it and ſtic adhere thereto, can ſo well diſcover or deſcribe the ex lent fruits that grow upon it, as doth this philoſoph ours, as the ancient Fathers are wont to call it. O philoſophies have indeed highly commended virtue, vehemently exhorted thereto; but the grounds on w they laid its praiſe are very ſandy, the argument which they enforced its practice are very feeble, the p ciples from which they deduced it, and the ends w they propounded thereto, are very poor and mean, if diſcuſs them; at leaſt if they be compared with ours: tue, ſaid they, is a thing of itſelf, upon account of its native beauty and worth, abſtracting from all reward profit ſpringing from it, very admirable and deſirable is beſide a very pleaſant and very uſeful thing, begeo tranquillity and ſatisfaction of mind; yielding he ſafety, reputation, pleaſure, quiet, and other manifold veniences of life: but can ſo magnificent and ſo ma fabric of commendation ſtand firm upon ſuch foundat as theſe? are theſe principles of love and admirati

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lly seem reason or wisdom so to do. But the Christian
trine, as it comprise th, and in an inferior order urgeth
, such grounds and arguments, so it doth exhibit others
more solid and forcible: it commendeth goodness to
not only as agreeable to man's imperfect and fallible
m, but as conformable to the perfect goodness of
, as the dictate of his infallible wisdom, as the resolu-
of his most holy will; as enjoined by his unquestion-
authority, as our indispensable duty, and only way
ppiness: the principles, from which it willeth us to act,
love, reverence, and gratitude to God, hearty good-
toward men, and a sober regard to our own true wel-
; the ends which it prescribeth are God's honour,
ic edification, and the salvation of our own souls: it
th us to good practice, by minding us, that we shall
eby resemble the Supreme Goodness, shall express our
itude toward that great Benefactor, unto whom we
all that we have; shall discharge our duty, pay due
our, perform faithful service to our Almighty Lord
King; that we shall thereby surely decline the wrath
displeasure of God, shall surely obtain his favour and
cy, with all sorts of blessings needful or profitable for
that we shall not only avoid regrets and terrors of
cience here, but escape endless miseries and torments;
shall not only procure present comfort and peace of
d, but shall acquire crowns of everlasting glory and
. These surely are the truest and firmest grounds up-
which a right estimation of virtue can subsist; these are
ives incomparably most effectual to the embracing
eof; these are the purest fountains whence it can
g, the noblest marks whither it can aim; a virtue so
nded, so reared, is certainly most sound and genuine,
firm and stable, most infinitely beneficial. But far-
,

. It is a peculiar advantage of Christianity, (which no
er law or doctrine so much as pretendeth to,) that it
only clearly teacheth us and strongly persuadeth us to
excellent a way of life, but provideth also sufficient
p and ability to practise it; without which (such is the

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frailty of our nature, as experience proveth, that) all instruction, all exhortation, all encouragement, would avail little. Other laws, for want of this, are in effect *ministers of condemnation*, racks of conscience, parents of guilt and of regret; reading hard lessons, but not assisting to do after them; imposing heavy burdens, but not enabling to bear them: our law is not such; it is not *a dead letter*, but hath a *quickening spirit* accompanying it; it not only soundeth through the ear, but stampeth itself upon the heart of him that sincerely doth embrace it; it always carrieth with it a sure guide to all good, and a safe guard from all evil: if our mind be doubtful or dark, it directeth us to a faithful oracle, where we may receive counsel and information: if our passions are unruly, if our appetites are outrageous, if temptations be violent, and threaten to overbear us, it leadeth us to a full magazine, whence we may furnish ourselves with all manner of arms to withstand and subdue them: if our condition, in respect to all other means, be disconsolate or desperate, it sendeth us to a place, where we shall not fail of refreshment and relief; it offereth, upon our earnest seeking and asking, the wisdom and strength of God himself for our direction, our aid, our support and comfort, in all exigencies. To them, who with due fervency and constancy *ask it*, God hath in the Gospel promised to *grant his holy Spirit*, to guide them in their ways, to admonish them of their duty, to strengthen them in obedience, to guard them from surprises and assaults of temptation, to sustain them, and cheer them in afflictions. This advantage, as it is proper to our religion, so it is exceedingly considerable; for what would the most perfect rule or way signify, without as well a power to observe it, as a light to discern it? and how can man, (so ignorant, so impotent, so inconstant a creature; so easily deluded by false appearances, and transported with disorderly passions; so easily shaken and unsettled by any small assault,) either alone without some guidance perceive, or by himself without some assistance prosecute, what is good for him, especially in cases of intricacy and difficulty? how should he who hath frequent experience of

2 Cor. iii. 7, 9. Rom. v. 20. Aug. de Spir. et lit. Τοῖς δὲ βίῳ ἐνανηρημένοις ἰσχὺν πρὸς τὴν λοιπὴν συνηρείαν ἐμποιεῖ. Clem. Alex. Strom. vi. p. 523.

Luke xi. 13.

is own weakneſs, not be utterly diſheartened and caſt into SERM. XVI.
eſpair either of ſtanding faſt in a good ſtate, or of re-
overing himſelf from a bad one; of reſcuing himſelf from
ny vicious inclination, or attaining any virtuous habit, if
e did not apprehend ſuch a friendly power vigilantly
uarding him, ready upon all occaſions to ſuccour and
bet him? this conſideration it is, which only can nouriſh
ur hope, can excite our courage, can quicken and ſupport
ur endeavour in religious practice, by aſſuring us, that
here is no duty ſo hard, which by the grace vouchſafed
s we may not achieve; that there is no enemy ſo
ighty, which by the help afforded us we cannot maſter;
o that, although we find ourſelves *able to do nothing of* Phil. iv. 13.
urſelves, yet *we can do all things by Chriſt that ſtrength-*
neth us.

8. Another peculiar excellency of our religion is this,
hat it alone can appeaſe and ſatisfy a man's conſcience,
reeding therein a well-grounded hope, and a ſolid com-
ort; healing the wounds of bitter remorſe and anxious
ear, which the ſenſe of guilt doth inflict: *There is no man,* 2 Chron.
s King Solomon ſaid, and all men know, *who ſinneth not;* vi. 36. Eccleſ. vii.
who doth not find himſelf in thought, word, and deed, fre- 20.
uently thwarting the dictates of reaſon, violating the
aws of piety and juſtice, tranſgreſſing the bounds of ſobri-
ty; who conſequently doth not in his own judgment
ondemn himſelf of diſorder, and of offence committed
gainſt the world's great Lawgiver and Governor, the juſt
Patron of right and goodneſs; who thence doth not deem
himſelf obnoxious to God's wrath, and is not fearful of
deſerved puniſhment from him: which fear muſt needs be Pœna poteſt
ſoftered and augmented by conſidering, that as paſt facts demi, culpa
are irrevocable, ſo guilt is indelible, and puniſhment, ex- perennis
cept by the voluntary remiſſion of him that is offended, erit. *Ovid.*
inevitable; as alſo that there are no viſible means of re-
moving or abating ſuch guilt by any reparation or amends
that he can make, who is more apt to accumulate new
offences, than able to compenſate for what he hath com-
mitted: now in ſuch a caſe, ſome man indeed may frame Wiſd. xii.
to himſelf hopes of mercy; may from the experience of 19.

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God's forbearance to puniſh, and continuance of his bounty to ſinners, preſume that God is placable, and will not be rigorous in his proceedings with him; may hopefully gueſs, that in favour God will admit his endeavours at repentance, will accept the compenſations he offereth in lieu of his duty, may ſuffer his guilt to be atoned by the ſacrifices he preſenteth; yet can no man upon ſuch preſumptions ground a full confidence that he ſhall find mercy; he cannot however be ſatisfied upon what terms mercy will be granted, in what manner it ſhall be diſpenſed, or how far it ſhall extend; God never having exhibited any expreſs declarations or promiſes to thoſe purpoſes; no man therefore can otherwiſe than ſuſpect himſelf to be in a bad ſtate, or eſteem himſelf ſecure from the purſuits of juſtice and wrath; as he knoweth that *ſin lieth at the door*, ſo he cannot know but that vengeance may lie near it; hence common reaſon, as well as the Jewiſh law, is a *miniſtry of death*, and *a killing letter*, carrying nothing in the looks or language thereof, but death and ruin; hence is a man (if at leaſt he be not beſotted into a careleſs ſtupidity) ſhut up in an irkſome bondage of ſpirit, under the grievous tyranny, if not of utter deſpair, yet of reſtleſs ſuſpicion about his condition; which as it quencheth in his mind all ſteady peace and joy, ſo it dampeth his courage and alacrity, it enervateth his care and induſtry to do well, he doubting what ſucceſs and what acceptance his undertakings may find; it alſo cooleth in him good affections towards God, whom that he hath offended he knoweth, and queſtioneth whether he can be able to reconcile.

Gen. iv. 7.

2 Cor. iii. 6.

Rom. viii. 15.

From this unhappy plight our religion thoroughly doth reſcue us, aſſuring us, that God Almighty is not only reconcileable, but deſirous, upon good terms, to become our friend, himſelf moſt frankly propoſing overtures of grace, and ſoliciting us to cloſe with them; it upon our compliance tendereth, under God's own hand and ſeal, a full diſcharge of all guilts and debts, however contracted; it receiveth a man into perfect favour and friendſhip, if he doth not himſelf wilfully reject them, or reſolve to continue at diſtance, in eſtrangement and enmity toward God. It

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proclaimeth, that if we be careful to amend, God will not be *extreme to mark what we do amiss*; that iniquity, if we do not incorrigibly affect and cherish it, *shall not be our ruin*; that although by our infirmity we fall often, yet by our repentance we may rise again, and by our sincerity shall stand upright; that our endeavours to serve and please God (although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere) will be accepted by him: this is the tenor of that great covenant between heaven and earth, which the Son of God did procure by his intercession, did purchase by his merits of wonderful obedience and patience, did ratify and seal by his blood; did publish to mankind, did confirm by miraculous works, did solemnize by holy institutions, doth by the evangelical ministry continually recommend to all men; so that we can nowise doubt of its full accomplishment on God's part, if we be not deficient on ours: so to our inestimable benefit and unspeakable comfort doth our religion ease their conscience, and encourage them in the practice of their duty, who do sincerely embrace it, and firmly adhere thereto.

Psal. cxxx. 3, 4. Ezek. xviii. 30.

9. The last advantage which I shall mention of this doctrine is this; that it propoundeth and asserteth itself in a manner very convincing and satisfactory: it propoundeth itself in a style and garb of speech, as accommodate to the general capacity of its hearers, so proper to the authority which it claimeth, becoming the majesty and sincerity of divine truth; it expresseth itself plainly and simply, without any affectation or artifice, without ostentation of wit or eloquence, such as men study to insinuate and impress their devices by: [e] it also speaketh with an imperious and awful confidence, such as argueth the speaker satisfied both of his own wisdom and authority; that he doubteth not of what he saith himself, that he knoweth his hearers obliged to believe him; its words

1 Cor. i. 17. ii. 2. Ἀπλῶς δ' μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἔφυ. *Eurip.* Vid. Orig. in Cels. lib. 6. Last. iii. 1. Matt. vii. 29.

[e] Οὐ γὰρ πείθειν ἠρώτων, οὐδὲ λίξιν ἔπεσιν, οὐδὲ ἐπῳδαῖς καὶ ἠρώτων κόσμῳ καὶ πανοῦργον ἐξήμεθα σοφιστὴν καὶ ἀνόητον (πάλιν γὰρ ταῦτα τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀνόητα) ἀλλὰ ἰσχὺν ἄμαχον καὶ θεῖον, καὶ ἐγγράφων ἐφθῶν ἀμάχητον δύναμιν, καὶ ἀφθόνον χαρακτῆρα ἀγαθῶν. *Chrys. Procem. in Joh.*

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are not like the words of a wise man, who is wary and careful that he slip not into mistake, (interposing therefore now and then his may-be's and perchances,) nor like the words of a learned scribe, grounded on semblances of reason, and backed with testimonies; nor as the words of a crafty sophister, who by long circuits, subtile fetches, and sly trains of discourse doth inveigle men to his opinion; but like the words of a king, carrying with them authority and power uncontrollable, commanding forthwith attention, assent, and obedience; [f] this you are to believe, this you are to do, upon pain of our high displeasure, at your utmost peril be it; your life, your salvation dependeth thereon: such is the style and tenor thereof, plainly such as becometh the sovereign Lord of all to use, when he shall please to proclaim his mind and will unto us. It freeth us from laborious and anxious inquiries, from endless disputes and janglings, from urging ineffectual arguments, and answering cross difficulties, &c. It doth also assert itself and approve its truth to the reason of man the most advantageously that can be; with proofs most suitable to itself, and in themselves most effectual; [g] waving those inferior methods of subtile argumentation and plausible language with which men are wont to confirm or set off their conceits; which how weak they are, how unfit to maintain truth, their unsuccessfulness doth evince; seeing by those means scarce any man hath been able thoroughly either to settle himself in or to draw others to a full persuasion concerning any important truth, discosted from sense: such methods therefore the Christian doctrine hath waved, (or rather slighted, as beneath itself,) applying arguments to the demonstration of its truth, far more potent, more sublime, and indeed truly

Eccles. viii. 4.

[f] Quæ quidem tradita sunt breviter, ac nude; nec enim decebat aliter, ut cum Deus ad hominem loqueretur, argumentis assereret suas voces, tanquam fides ei non haberetur, sed ut oportuit est locutus, quasi rerum omnium maximus judex, cujus non est argumentari, sed pronunciare verum. *Lact.* iii. 1.

[g] Legant nostra—quam excellenter quam divine, non tanquam ex philosophorum concertationibus strepere, sed tanquam ex oraculis et Dei nubibus intonare. *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, ii. 19.

divine; beside its intrinsic worth, or the excellency shining in itself, (which speaketh it worthy of God, and goeth more than half way in proving it to proceed from him,) there is no kind of attestation needful or proper, which God hath not afforded thereto; God is in himself invisible and undiscernible to any sense of ours, neither could we endure the lustre and glory of his immediate presence; it must be therefore by effects of his incommunicable power, by works extraordinary and supernatural, (such as no creature can perform or counterfeit,) that he must, if ever, convincingly signify his purpose or pleasure to us; and such innumerable hath God vouchsafed to yield in favour and countenance of our religion; by clearly predicting and presignifying the future revelation of this doctrine by express voices and manifest apparitions from heaven, by suspending and thwarting the course of natural causes in many ways and instances, by miracles of providence no less remarkable than those of nature, by internal attestations to the minds and consciences of men; things too great slightly to be passed over, and the particular mention of which I must therefore now omit; by such wonderful means, I say, hath God taken care to convince us, that our religion came from him, which is a peculiar advantage that it hath, such as no other institution (except that of the Jews, which was a prelude thereto, and whose truth serveth to confirm it) can reasonably pretend unto; and a great perfection it is thereof, since as it is no small content to a traveller, by a direction which he can fully confide in, to know that he is in the right way to his journey's end; so it cannot but prove an exceeding satisfaction and encouragement to us to be assured, by infallible testimony of God himself, that our religion is the true and direct way unto eternal happiness.

These considerations may, I conceive, be sufficient, as to vindicate our religion from all aspersions cast upon it either by inconsiderate and injudicious, or by vain and dissolute persons; so to confirm us all in the esteem, and incite us to the practice thereof; which use of them God in his

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1 Pet. v. 10. Now *the God of grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Chriſt Jeſus — make you perfect, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

2 Theſſ. ii. 16, 17. Now *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlaſting conſolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and ſtabliſh you in every good word and work.*

SERMON XVII.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.

—— *Proving that this is the very Christ.*

AS for the name of *Messias*, there is evident reason why it should not be openly expressed in the ancient predictions; it being an easy thing for any persons, out of imposture or wantonness, to have assumed that name; and consequently it would not have suited so well the true person. It was therefore more expedient, that his name should rather only be covertly signified or intimated; it was sufficient that a name should be imposed on him well agreeing to his office and chief performances. There be indeed several names attributed to the Messias; *They shall call his name Emanuel*, said Isaiah; *This is his name, whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness*, (*Jehovah tsidkenu*;) and, *His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace*, said Isaiah again; but it is apparent, that these were not intended to be so much his proper names, as attributes or epithets congruous unto him in regard to the eminency of his person and performances.

But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ. *Euseb. Hist.* i. 3.

Isa. vii. 14. Jer. xxiii. 6. Isa. ix. 6.

The Prophet Zechariah seemeth also (insisting in the footsteps of Isaiah and Jeremiah) to assign him the name Netser, (or the Branch;) *Behold the man whose name is The*

Zech. vi. 12. iii. 8. Is. iv. 2. xi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 5. xxxiii. 15. Matt. ii. 23.

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Branch: but this only denoted an appellation suiting him, as derived from the stock of David, and might beside mystically allude to some circumstance concerning him. It doth not therefore appear, that the one proper name, by which the Messias, as the Son of man, should be known and called, is directly forementioned; yet it is reasonable to suppose, that God would have an especial care, that he should have one befitting him. It was one of the seven things which the Talmudists say were constituted before the world: the *law*, *repentance*, *paradise*, *hell*, the *throne of glory*, the *sanctuary*, the *name of the Messias*; according to that in the seventy-second Psalm, ver. 17. *Ante solem primum nomen ejus;* so it seems they read it: the LXX. have it, πρὸ τοῦ ἡλίου διαμενεῖ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

It was anciently a method of Divine Providence to impose upon persons (destinated by God to be especial subjects of his favour and eminent ministers of his glory) names answerable to the nature of their employment, or to the design which was by their means and ministry to be accomplished. Whereby as God's care and providence over human affairs was declared, so men upon the mention of such names were admonished to consider the divine benefits, and the duties correspondent to them. The particular reason of imposing such names is sometime expressly set down; as in the cases of Seth, Abraham, Israel, Solomon; sometime it seems tacitly implied, the actions of the persons interpreting the reason of their names, as in Melchizedek, Joshua, Malachi, and perhaps in many others.

Gen. iv. 25. xvii. 5. xxxii. 28. 1 Chr. xxii. 9. Gen. xiii. 18. Heb. vii. 1.

This method with great reason we may suppose that the same divine wisdom would use in assigning a name to that Person, whom from the beginning of things he had promised, and before the foundation of the world had designed to sanctify and send into the world, for achieving the most high and excellent design that ever, for the glory of God and the good of his creation, was to be undertaken in this world. Most fit it would be, that God himself should be his god-father; that he should have no ordinary, no casual, no insignificant name; but such an one,

John x. 36.

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which being heard might instruct and admonish us, might raise in us a sense of God's infinite mercy and bounty toward us; might breed love in our hearts, and impress veneration on our minds toward him, who should bear that auspicious and comfortable name; that name, which as the spouse of the mystical Solomon in her mystical song, did sing, is *as an ointment poured forth*, full of most wholesome and most pleasant fragrancy. Cant. i. 3.

Now since of all the Messias's performances none was to be more signal, than that of saving; to publish, to purchase, to effect salvation, were to be (according to what the Prophets expressly and frequently say) his peculiar works; to be the Saviour of the world was (as we before touched, according to the common opinion of the Jews) a proper attribute of his. Is. xxv. 9. xxxv. 4. xlix. 8, 26. lxiii. 1. lv. 5. lii. 7, 10. lxi. 10. lix. 16. Hos. i. 7. Zech. ix. 9. John iv. 42.

Wherefore the name Jesus (which we are told in the Gospel was by direction from God imparted by particular revelation, brought by an archangel from heaven, imposed on our Lord) did very well suit the Messias. No other name could be more sweet or acceptable; no other name could better become him, who was to redeem men from all their enemies, their slaveries, their errors, their sins, their miseries. Matt. i. 21. Luke i. 32. ii. 21.

It was indeed a name not in its immediate application altogether new, for many others had borne it: Jesus, the son of Justus, we have mentioned in St. Paul; Jesus the son of Sirach, that excellent writer, we know; and divers others so named occur in Josephus: yet was it questionless by God's providence, or by Moses, by divine instinct, first introduced with relation to the Messias; *Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua*, saith the text: being in a mysterious exchange from a former name assigned to the famous Jesus (as not only Bensirach, but the Apostle to the Hebrews write him) the son of Nun, who of all the ancient types did most exactly (in office and performance) represent and presignify the Messias; being, as Bensirach speaks, *great for the saving of God's elect*; whose actions are wonderfully congruous to those which we attribute to our Jesus. For, by the way, to shew the resemblance, Col. iv. 11. Basil. Iren. &c. Num. xiii. 16. Ecclus. xlvi. 1. Heb. iv. 8.

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(omitting less, and more nice congruities,) as Josiua did bring the good report, and evangelized concerning the
Num. xiv. 7. promised land, (when other false or faint inquirers defamed it, and discouraged the people from entering;) as he was educated under Moses, and served him faithfully; as he succeeded in the administration and government of God's people, perfecting what Moses had begun of deliverance and settlement to them; as he brought the Israelites out (that old disbelieving, mutinous, and repining generation, but a new progeny of better disposed people) finally out of the wilderness into Canaan, by God's miraculous assistance, subduing their enemies, and establishing them in
Josh. v. 2. a quiet possession of the promised land, allotting unto each tribe its inheritance; and as he did re-circumcise the children of Israel: so did our heavenly Jesus first make
Heb. xi. a true and faithful discovery concerning the mystical land of promise (that better country) flowing with spiritual milk and honey, (abundant with all spiritual comforts and pleasures, for the food, sustenance, and refreshment of our
Gal. iv. 4. souls.) He was born under the Law, and submitted to its
Matt. iii. 15 v. 17. injunctions, fulfilling all righteousness. He survived it
Ἀρχαῖος τοῦ καιροῦ (the part of it which was purely Mosaical and arbitrar

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al histories) is *the Christ*, is the principal article of pure faith; the most peculiar doctrine of our religion as such, and as distinct from all other religions: it indeed virtually comprehends all other doctrines of moment therein, regarding either faith or practice. For that our being persuaded that *Jesus is the Christ*, implies, that we apprehend ourselves obliged to embrace for truth whatever was taught by him and his Apostles, to obey all his laws, to rely upon him for attainment of all the mercies, and blessings, and rewards, which he promised to dispense, in that order and upon those terms, which the Gospel declareth. Whence to the hearty belief of this point such great commendations are given, so high rewards are offered, so excellent privileges are annexed in the Scriptures. Whence also the declaring, proving, and persuading this doctrine was the chief matter of the Apostles' preaching, as both their profession and practice do shew. *The Jews*, saith St. Paul to the Corinthians, *require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ, that was crucified.* And, *I determined*, saith he again of himself, *not to know any thing among you*, (that is, not to discover any other knowledge, not to insist on any other subject,) *save Jesus Christ, even him that was crucified.* This, St. John tells us, was the drift of his writing the Gospel, (which is a more extensive and durable way of preaching.) *These things*, saith he, *were written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ.* And their practice, suitable to such professions, is apparent in divers passages of this Book, wherein their acts and their discourses are reported. This text particularly represents the scope to which St. Paul mainly directed his preaching, which was the maintenance and persuasion of this point, that *Jesus is the Christ.*

1 Cor. i. 23. ii. 2.

καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον.

John xx. 31.

It is therefore very requisite, that we should well understand the meaning thereof, and that we should firmly be persuaded of its truth. To which purpose I shall endeavour, by God's assistance, to imitate St. Paul's practice here, who did συμβιβάζων, (that is the Greek word here, signifying primarily to put or bring things together, and thence in a way of collection or argumentation to teach,)

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who, I say, did instruct his auditors, collecting it from testimonies of ancient Scripture, and confirming it by arguments grounded thereon. In performing which I shall observe this method:

1. I shall explain the notion and reason of this name, or title, *Christ*.

2. I shall shew (that which is here tacitly supposed) that there was by God's appointment to be, or to come into the world from God, one Person, signally that, which this name or title imports, ὁ Χριστὸς, *the very Christ*.

3. I shall argue that *Jesus* was that Person.

4. I shall explain in what manner, in what respects, to what purposes, *Jesus*, in the New Testament, is represented as *Christ*.

5. I shall make some practical application of the point.

John i. 21. iv. 25.

I. For the first particular. Christ is a name, or title, importing office and dignity; being the same with Messias, that in Greek, this in Hebrew, signifying, the Anointed; the which appellation we find attributed to several persons upon the following ground: Of ancient times, in the eastern countries, (abounding as with good oil, so with many delicate odoriferous spices,) it seems generally to have been the manner, (as from Hazael the Syrian his being anointed may probably be collected,) it was however such among the Jews, to separate or consecrate persons, and things also I might add, designed to any great or extraordinary employment, by anointing them with ointments composed of those ingredients; they symbolizing, or denoting thereby, as it seems, both a plentiful effusion upon them of gifts and faculties qualifying them for such services; and also a comfortable and pleasant diffusion of good and grateful effects expected from them; (from the use of things, the performances of persons thus sanctified.) *Thy name*, saith the spouse in the Canticles, *is as an ointment poured forth;* that is, thy name is very delightful, very acceptable. And, *Behold*, saith David, commending brotherly love and concord, *how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran*

1 Kings xix. 15.

Cant. i. 2.

Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 2.

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run upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: so good and pleasant were those employments hoped to be, to which men were by such unction inaugurated. We find especially three sorts of persons, to whom this consecration did, by divine appointment, belong; Kings, Priests, and Prophets; persons by whose ministry God of old did manage his intercourse with men, in governing them and communicating his blessings to them, both in an ordinary way (so he used kings and priests) and in an extraordinary manner, therein he employed prophets; which sorts of persons are therefore styled God's anointed; kings and priests more frequently, but sometimes also prophets; as in that of the Psalm; *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm;* where prophets and the anointed of God do seem to denote the same thing, and one to expound the other: however they belong to the same persons; for Abraham, whom together with the other patriarchs those words concern, is expressly called a prophet. (*Now therefore,* saith the text, *restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live.*) And that Isaac was a prophet, the Apostle to the Hebrews intimates, saying; *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.* The same is plain of Jacob, who before his death uttered many great and remarkable predictions. The patriarchs therefore probably as prophets were styled *God's anointed.* But to remark somewhat of these great offices, and their anointing singly:

Ps. cv. 15. 1 Chron. xvi. 22.

Gen. xx. 7.

Heb. xi. 20.

For priests, although at first all the sons of Aaron were thus consecrated, according to that law in Exodus, *Thou shalt anoint Aaron, and his sons, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office;* yet the Jewish masters tell us, that afterward in all the course of times only the high-priest was so consecrated. Whence by the anointed, or the priest that is anointed, is, say they, meant the high-priest, in distinction from other inferior priests.

Exod. xxx. 30. xl. 15. Χριστὸ ἱερεῦς. Mac. ii. 1, 10. Selden. de Succ. ii. 9. Levit. iv. 3, 5, 16. vi. 22.

For kings, the Jewish doctors also (as Master Selden reports) do tell us, that such of them, who in a legal, orderly, and unquestioned course of right did succeed into the kingdom, were not themselves in person anointed,

ὃς καὶ αὐτοὺς πνεύματι θείῳ προφῆτας χρίοντες εἰκονικοὺς τινας Χριστὺς ἀπειργάζοντο. *Euseb. Hist.* i. 3.

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(they being conceived to derive a sufficient consec
from their ancestors;) but all those, who in an extr
nary way by special designation, (as Saul, David,
Hazael,) or upon a doubtful and controverted, or op
title, (as Solomon and Joas,) did assume the royal cl
were thus initiated: (how ancient also the custo
anointing princes was, may be seen from that express
Jotham's parable; *The trees went forth to anoint a*
over them, and they said to the olive tree, Reign thou
us.)

2 Kings ix. 3 xi 12. 1 Kings xix. 15 i. 39.

Judges ix. 8.

As for prophets, we do not find that they were
monly, or according to ordinary rule, anointed; bu
plain instance we have of Elisha, substituted to Elijah
chief of prophets in his time,) in this manner: E
it is said by God, *the son of Shaphat, shalt thou ano*
be prophet in thy room; who was thus consecrated,
bably, because he was to be a prophet more than ord
endued with higher gifts, and designed to greater ac
than common prophets were then; or perhaps be
he was to be the archprophet, or head of the proph
that time.

1 Kings xix. 16.

We may also farther observe, that some persons

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all of these charges and functions; an extraordinary king, or a great priest, or an eminent prophet; or one, in whom either more or all of these did concur. So much may suffice for the notion and reason of this title, *Christ*.

II. Now that there was a Person supereminently endued with all these characters, (a *Christ* in all these respects,) decreed by God in due time to come into the world for accomplishment of the greatest purposes answerable to that title, (for the instruction and reformation of the world, for the erecting and managing an universal and perpetual kingdom, for the reconciliation and benediction of mankind, for the reduction of all nations to the acknowledgment of God, and obedience to his will, and hope in his mercy,) many express passages in the ancient Scripture declare.

That such a prophet should be sent, Moses in express terms foretold: *The Lord thy God*, saith he, *shall raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken*: and, *I will*, saith God himself, *raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him*, &c. which words plainly describe a very extraordinary prophet some time to come, who was (signally and especially, beyond all other prophets) to resemble Moses; who consequently was to accomplish high designs, and to achieve wonderful acts; to conduct and deliver God's people, to reveal God's mind and will, to promulge a new law, and establish a new covenant; so his resembling Moses doth imply, so his mission doth signify; (for why, if he were not intended for the performance of somewhat great and new, even beyond what Moses did, should he be designed so formally; what need or reason had there been of his mission, after Moses?) and so the later prophets do interpret the great Lawgiver's words: who largely predict concerning one, ordained by God to come, who should eminently discharge all parts of the prophetical function; who should disclose new truths to men, should proclaim a new law to the world, should

Deut. xviii. 15, 18. John i. 46. Acts iii. 22. vii. 37.

Jer. xxxi. 33.

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establish a new covenant with the house of Israel, an
all people; who should propagate the knowled
worship of God, enlightening the Gentiles, and c
ing them unto God; who should instruct the ig
strengthen the faint, comfort the afflicted; accor
divers passages concerning him; as, for instance,
Isaiah, cited by St. Luke: *The Spirit of the Lord*
me; because the Lord hath anointed me to prea
tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind
brokenhearted—and that in the same Prophet all
St. Matthew; *Behold my servant, whom I uphol*
elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put m
upon him; he shall bring forth judgment unto the
he shall not cry, &c. which being anointed to
tidings and to bring forth judgment from God
elected and inspired by God in order to such perfor
are peculiar marks of a prophet; such promulg
God's will, such ministration of direction and
from God, are the proper employment of a proph
is, of an especial agent sent and qualified by God t
act spiritual affairs with men, and to declare or d
his pleasure to them.

Isa. xlix. 8.
Isa. lxi. 1. Luke iv. 18.
Isa. xlii. 1. Matt. xii. 18.

The ancient Scriptures do also plainly signify c
ing the same person, that he should be a great Prin
stituted by God to govern his people for ever in rig
ness, peace, and prosperity; endued with power
for delivering them from oppression and slavery;
duing their enemies, for reducing the nations un
jection unto God. So Isaiah: *For unto us a child*
unto us a son is given; and the government shall be
shoulders—Of the increase of his government an
there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, a
his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with ju
and with justice for ever. Jeremiah: *Behold, t*
come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David
eous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, a
execute judgment and justice in the earth: in h
Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safel
kiel: *I will save my flock, they shall be no more a*

Acts ii. 36.
Luke i. 71, 74.
Isa. ix. 6. xi. 1, 10. xvi. 5.
Jer. xxiii. 5. xxxiii. 15. xxx. 8.
Ezek. xxxiv. 22, &c.

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and I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—they shall also walk in my statutes, and observe my statutes, and do them. Daniel: *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days—And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages shall serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* Hosea: *The children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.* The Psalmist: *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion; ask of me, and I will give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* In these and in many other places do the Prophets speak (very perspicuously and magnificently) concerning the kingdom, royal state, and princely achievements of this great personage who should come.

Ezek. xxxvi. 21, &c. xxxvii. 21, &c. Dan. vii. 13, 14. ii. 44, 45. Hos. iii. 5. Psal. ii. 6, 8. lxxii. 11, 17. xlv. 6. lxxxix. 3, 27, 36. cxxxii. 17, 18.

That he also should assume and execute the priestly function may also be learned from prophetical instruction. For of him Zechariah thus spake: *Behold the man whose name is The Branch;* (a name, which so often (in sense) is attributed to this Person, as sprouting from the stock of David;) *he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit, and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of the Lord shall be between them both.* Of him also David spake: *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.* To *make reconciliation for iniquity,* (which Daniel ascribes to him;) to *bear the sins of the people,* and to *make intercession for the transgressors,* (which are assigned to him by Isaiah;) are also performances, from which his sacerdotal office may be collected.

Zech. vi. 12. ἀνατολὴ צמח. Ps. cx. 4. Dan. ix. 24. Isa. liii. 12.

These things being considered, it is no wonder that the ancient Jews (although the text of Scripture doth seldom, perhaps not oftener than once, (in the ninth of Daniel,) explicitly and directly apply this name of Christ, or Messias, to this illustrious Person, so prophesied of and pro-

Ps. xlv. 7. Isa. lxi. 1.

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mised to come) did especially assign this title unto him; it seeming of any most congruous and most comprehensive of what appertained to him; most apt to denote all the prerogatives, the endowments, the achievements, the effects, which should belong to him, or proceed from him. Whence it is observed by the learned, that the Chaldee paraphrase (composed, as they say, before Jesus our Lord's time, by the priests, as an interpretation of the not so exactly understood Hebrew Scripture, for edification and instruction of the people) doth very often apply unto him this name of the Messias: according to whose exposition and style, together with tradition continually deduced down from the Prophets themselves, (as is probable,) we see plainly from the New Testament, and from other history conspiring therewith, that God's people unanimously did expect a person under this name and notion, who should be endued with qualities and should perform actions conformable to the characters mentioned, to come in determinate time into the world. Of Anna the prophetess
Luke ii. 38. it is said, that *she gave thanks likewise to the Lord, and spake of him* πᾶσι τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν, *to all that expected redemption in Jerusalem.* Hence when St. John the Baptist did live, and teach in a manner extraordinary,
Luke iii. 15. *the people did expect, and all men mused in their hearts concerning him, whether he were the Christ.* Yea
John i. 19. *the Jews* (that is, their Senate, or great Sanhedrim) *sent Priests and Levites to inquire of him, whether he were the Christ or no:* and when Jesus's admirable discourses and
John vii. 31. works had convinced divers persons, they said, *When Christ comes, shall he do greater miracles than this man hath done?* and the report which Philip made to Na-
John i. 45. thanael concerning Jesus was this; *We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write:* so at
John iv. 42. large they did presume concerning *a Christ to come.* That they particularly did conceive he should be a great prophet, who should abundantly declare God's truth and will, may be gathered from divers passages; as from that in
John vi. 14. St. John: *Men therefore seeing the miracle that Jesus had done, said, That this is in truth the prophet, who was to*

come into the world. Thus may that in St. Luke be taken; *And there came a fear upon all; and they glorified God, saying, That the great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people:* and this the Samaritan woman implied, when she said, *I know that the Messias comes; and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.* That they supposed he should be a king, who should be furnished with mighty power, and should perform wonderful acts; who should assume the government of God's people with royal majesty, and execute it with glorious success, is most clear. It was no wonder to King Herod to hear the wise men's inquiry, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews?* Upon it he immediately demands of the Scribes *where Christ is to be born.* Hence no sooner did Nathanael believe in Christ, but he cries out, *Master, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.* It was upon this supposition that the priests grounded their calumny; *We have found this man perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying, that he himself is Christ, the King*; as also hence (upon information and by instinct from them) Pilate asked him that question, *Art thou the King of the Jews?* hence likewise proceeded that acclamation; Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος βασιλεὺς, *Blessed is the King, that is to come in the name of the Lord.* And it was from this ancient popular prejudice, that the Apostles asked Jesus after his resurrection, *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?* It is indeed the ordinary title, which the Talmudists and ancient Rabbins give the Messias, *Hammelech Messiah*, Messias the King.

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Luke vii. 16.

John iv. 25.

Matt. ii. 2, 4.

John i. 50.

Luke xxiii. 3.

Luke xix. 38.

Acts i. 6.

That the Messias in their opinion was also to be a priest, is not so clearly apparent; yet it may probably be inferred: that they understood the 110th Psalm to respect the Messias is very likely, or rather certain, from that passage in the Gospel, in which Jesus asked the Pharisees, *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?* and they answering, *The Son of David*, he returned upon them this puzzling question; *How then doth David in the spirit* (that is, prophetically) *call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand?* which question con-

Matt. xxii. 43.

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founded them, they not daring to deny that Psalm w respect the Messias, (it being the received opinion amo the Doctors,) nor yet seeing how the relations of *Son* an *Lord* were reconcileable: and admitting that Psalm wa to be referred unto the Messias, they must consequentl acknowledge him to be a priest; for it is there said, Th *Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest fo ever after the order of Melchizedek.* It was also an opi nion passing among them, that the Messias should be th Saviour of the world, as may be collected from that say ing of the Samaritans; *We have heard him ourselves, an know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of th world:* which being their opinion, and toward the salva tion of men it being needful that a reconciliation of the unto God, and an expiation of their sins, (which are sace dotal acts) should be procured by him, it seems to follow that they had some notion of his *priesthood.* Indeed th persuasion concerning a Messias to come, about the tim when our Lord appeared, became diffused over the whol eastern parts; as even Pagan historians (Tacitus and Su tonius) do report [h]. And the conceit thereof was so vigo ous in the Jews, that it excited them to rebellion, and en couraged them with great obstinacy to persist therein, not only those historians, but Josephus himself telleth us he also together with them (which is somewhat strang referring the intent of those prophecies, and the verifyin of that opinion, to the person of the emperor Vespasia The same conceit did then likewise occasion many preten ers and impostors (such as Theudas, and Judas the Galil an) to arise, disposing also the people so easily to be delud

Psal. cx. 4.

John iv. 42. Luke ii. 38.

[h] Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus et constans opinio esse in fatis, ut tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. *Suet. in Vesp.*

Pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso te pore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. *Tac Hist.* v.

[i] Τὸ δὲ ἐπάραν αὐτοὺς μάλιστα πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον ἦν χρησμὸς ἀμφίβολος ὁμοίω τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἐνεγκόντος γράμμασιν, ὡς κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας τις αὐ ἄρξει τῆς οἰκουμένης.—ἐδήλου δ' ἅμα τὴν περὶ Οὐεσπασιανοῦ τὸ λόγιον ἡγεμονίαν, ἃ δειχθέντος ἐπὶ Ἰουδαίας αὐτοκράτορος. *Jos. ἁλώσ.* vi. 31.

by them, and so readily to run after them, as they did to their own harm. SERM. XVII.

Thus according to the ancient Scriptures, interpreted and backed by the current tradition and general consent of God's people, it is sufficiently apparent, that a Messias (according to the notion premised) was to come into the world.

III. Now farther, that Jesus, whom we acknowledge, was indeed that Messias, may appear plainly from the perfect correspondency of all circumstances belonging to the Messias's appearance, and of all characters suiting his person, and of all things to be performed by him; together with whatever was to be consequent upon his presence and performances; according to ancient presignifications and predictions, and according to the passable opinions of God's people concerning him; the which, as they cannot possibly suit with any other person that hath yet appeared, or may reasonably be expected to come hereafter, so they exactly agree to the coming, and person, and practice, and success of Jesus.

Among circumstances the most considerable is the time; the which (both when it was said that he should come, and when it was fit that he should come) did very well agree to Jesus. *But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son*, &c. *Fulness* in regard to ancient prediction, in regard to fitness of season. For as the Messias was to be *the desire of all nations*, so Jesus did come then, when by special instinct a general expectation and desire of his coming was raised in the world; at the time, when the Patriarch Jacob foretold that *Shiloh would come*, viz. *when the sceptre was* just *departed from Judah, and a Lawgiver from his feet;* Judea being brought under the dominion of strangers; (such were the Romans, such was King Herod.) About the expiration of Daniel's weeks, (however commenced or computed,) *the time determined to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy*, (as the Prophet speaks.)

Gal. iv. 4. Eph. i. 10. Acts xiv. 16. xvii. 30.

Gen. xlix. 8.

Dan. ix. 24.

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Shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, according to that of Daniel; *And after sixty and two weeks shall Messias be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.* When that *Zion, out of which*, as Isaiah tells us, *the law was to go forth; and out of which the Redeemer should come, and turn ungodliness from Jacob*, did stand and flourish. When the temple did stand, which the prophets Malachi and Haggai did predict should be illustrated by the presence of the Messiah: *The Lord, whom ye seek*, saith Malachi, *shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, in whom ye delight:* and, *I will*, saith Haggai, *shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord: the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord of hosts.* Before Jewry was desolated, Jerusalem destroyed, the tribes and families of Israel confounded, all that people wofully dispersed, and in a palpable manner deserted by God. When the Jewish religion (which the Messias was to complete) was by a numerous accession of proselytes dis-

Dan. ix. 26.

Isa. ii. 3

xlix. 20

Ma. iii. 1.

Hag. ii. 7, 9.

Isa. ix. 1

xl. 5. lxv. 25 lxv. 12

Ps. lxxii. 7

fessed. It was Porphyry's objection against Christianity, and an obvious one, why Christ did not come before, but in the latter days; to which the particular fitness of this time is an answer.

The other circumstances; the family out of which, the place where, the manner in which, Jesus was born, did also punctually correspond. He was to be an Israelite, according to the promise made of old to Abraham, that *in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed;* and according to Moses's prophecy; *The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren.* He was to come out of the tribe of Judah; as the Patriarch Jacob in his last prophetical rapture did by various expressions intimate and signify. Particularly he was to rise out of the family of David, as the prophets frequently and clearly did avouch; for he was, as Isaiah said, *to be a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch going out of his roots; a righteous Branch,* according to Jeremiah, *whom God would raise to David.* He whom Solomon (that most wise, peaceable, and prosperous prince, who raised that glorious temple, the emblem of God's Church) did presignify; and in whom the promises made to David concerning the perpetuity of his throne should be made good; *There shall not fail thee a man,* &c.—*Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever;* especially that absolute and irrevocable promise ratified by God's oath; *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne unto all generations:* who consequently by reason of conjunction in blood, and mutual representation, David prefiguring him, and he by succession into the imperial right expressing David, is by several of the prophets (by Jeremiah, by Ezekiel, by Hosea) called David: whence the learned among the Jews did consent, that the Messias was to be the Son of David; *How say the Scribes, that Christ is the Son of David?* and, *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?* (it is our Lord's question to the Pharisees;) *They say*

Gen. xxii. 18. Deut. xviii. 5. Gen. xlix. 7, &c. Rev. v. 5. xxii. 16. Isa. xi. 1, 10. Jer. xxiii. 5. xxxiii. 15. 1 Kings viii. 25. 2 Sam. vii. 16. 2 Chron. vi. 16. Ps. lxxxix. 3. cxxxii. 11. Luke i. 32, 69. Acts ii. 30. Jer. xxxiii. 17, 21, 22, 26. xxx. 9. Hos. iii. 5. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. xxxvii. 24, 25. Mark xii. 35. Matt. xxii. 42. (xxi. 9. Matt. xii. 23.)

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unto him, The Son of David. Yea the people were generally informed herein, and possessed with this sentiment; *Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David?* was a popular speech in St. John. *And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?* Now accordingly that Jesus came out of this country, tribe, and family, (that he was, as St. Luke speaketh, *of the house and lineage of David*, both according to natural and legal succession,) the express affirmation of angels, the positive attestation of his parents and kindred, (who best knew,) the genealogies (according to the manner of those times and that nation) carefully preserved, and produced by the Evangelists, do assure us; neither doth it appear that Jesus's adversaries did ever contest this point, but seem by their silence to have granted it, as easily and evidently proveable by authentic records and testimonies.

John vii. 42.
Matt. xxi. 23.
Luke ii. 4.
Matt. i. 20.
Luke i. 32, 69.

More precisely yet for the *place* of the Messias's birth, it was to be the town of Bethlehem; so the Prophet Micah foretold; thus cited by St. Matthew: *Thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.* So from thence did the learned judge; for being consulted by King Herod *where Christ was to be born*, they answered, *that in Bethlehem*: and so also did the people commonly believe, as appear

Mich. v. 2.
Matt. ii. 6.
Matt. ii. 5.

rtullian, and St. Chrysostom refer those, who would be tified in that particular [k]. SERM. XVII.

That place also of his parents' abode in Nazareth of Ga-e, upon which was consequent his first appearance in y of action, was so ordered, as to answer ancient pre-tions; according to which it was said, that *in the land Zabulon and Nephthali, by the way of the sea, beyond dan in Galilee of the nations, the people that walked in kness did see a great light, and they that dwelt in the d of the shadow of death, upon them the light shined.* Isa. i. 2. Matt. iv. 15.

The manner also of the Messias's birth, was, as became h a Person, to be very extraordinary, and different m the common generation of men: for he was not ly to be *one like the Son of man*, as the Prophet Daniel ms him, and indeed *the Son of David*, as all the pro-ecies declare of him, but the *Son of God* also; for, *ou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*, saith God him in the second Psalm. And that which in the first s perfect sense was said of Solomon, (who prefigured n,) was, according to a more sublime meaning, and re exactly to agree unto him: *He shall be my son, and vill be his father; and I will establish the throne of his igdom over Israel for ever: Also I will make him my st-born, higher than the kings of the earth:* and accord-gly we see, that the Jews (both the wiser and the vul-r sort) did suppose that he should be *the Son of God;* St. John the Baptist, so Nathanael, so Martha, so St. ter, and the other Apostles, when they became per-aded that Jesus was the Christ, did presently, according anticipation of judgment common to them with the ople, confess him to be *the Son of God;* the high-priest mself intimated the same, when he asked Jesus, *Art ou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?* Yea, the devils emselves were learned and orthodox in this point; who ied out, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of God.* Now that, cording to those prophecies and those traditions, the Dan. vii. 13. Ps. ii. 7, 12. 1 Chron. xxii. 10. 2 Sam. vii. 18. Ps. lxxxix. 27. John i. 34. 49. xi. 27. vi. 69. Matt. xvi. 16. Mark xiv. 61. Matt. xxvi. 63. Matt. viii. 29. Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 34.

[k] Κώμη δὲ τίς ἐστιν ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ Ἰουδαίων σταδίους λέ Ἱεροσολύμων, ἐν ᾗ ἐγεννήθη τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς καὶ μαθεῖν δύνασθαι ἐκ τῶν ἀναγραφῶν &c. *Just. Martyr. Apol.* *Tertull. in Marc.* iv. 19.

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Messias should be in a more than ordinary way, and (for the justifying of God's truth together with the satisfying men) should evidently appear to be the Son of God, it was requisite (at least convenient) that his birth should be procured by divine operation, without concurrence of a human father; (how otherwise, at least how better, could it be apparent that he was both the *Son of God* and *of man?*) [1]It was consequently either necessary or fit that he should be born of a virgin: and that he should indeed be so born, the Prophet Isaiah did signify, when he said, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign*, (that is, shall perform somewhat very remarkable and strange: what was that?) *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emanuel;* which prophecy that it belonged to the Messias appears from the report and description which follows in the continuation of this particular prophecy concerning this child: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, &c.* which description questionless appertaineth to the Messias. The same Prophet signifies the same concerning him, when he introduceth him speaking thus; *And now, saith*

Isa. vii. 14.

Matt. i. 22.

Isa. ix. 6.

Isa. xl. 1. 5.

per for a spiritual King, a most holy Priest, an absolute Prophet; who was to teach, exercise, and exemplify the most rough and harsh pieces of righteousness and piety, (contempt of worldly vanities and pleasures; all sorts of self-denial and abstinence; the virtues of meekness, humility, and patience;) who was to manage and execute his great undertakings, not by natural or human force, but by a virtue supernatural and divine; whose power consequently would be more conspicuous in a state of visible meanness and impotency, than in a condition of worldly splendor and strength; that also which he was to merit from God, and to undergo for the sake of men, doth argue the same: that such the Messias's state was to be, there are divers mystical intimations in the ancient Scripture; but the Prophet Isaiah speaks it out most plainly: *He shall grow up* (says he, describing that state) *before the Lord like a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.* And again: *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One; To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.*

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Isa. liii. 2.

Isa. xlix. 7.

Now that Jesus appeared thus in a poor, servile, and despicable condition, we need not for to prove; for as his followers avow it, so his adversaries are most ready to grant it; in the haughtiness of their conceit taking it for an advantage against him, it proves a scandal to them. *Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary? said they; and they were offended at him.* Hence was it, that, as the Prophet foretold, *He was despised and rejected of men, and they esteemed him not.* Thus all the circumstances of the Messias's coming were answered by those of Jesus.

Phil. ii. 7.
2 Cor. viii. 9.

Matt. xiii. 55.
Mark vi. 3.
Isa. liii. 3.

Now concerning the qualities and endowments of the Messias, which constitute his personal character, they are, as was expedient, such as should dispose and fit him for the discharge of his great employment and duty with utmost advantage, and especial decency: in general, he

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was to be endued with supereminent piety and sanctity, with perfect innocence and integrity; so it is implied in all the descriptions of his person and performances: *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre: thou loveſt righteousness, and hateſt iniquity; wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows*, said the Psalmist of him: and, *Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins*, said Isaiah of him, (denoting the ready disposition of his mind to do whatever was good:) and, *He had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips*, saith the same Prophet of him again. Some particular virtues and abilities are also ascribed to him in an eminent degree: excellent wisdom and knowledge in spiritual matters, thus represented by Isaiah: *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.* Eloquence also, skill and aptitude to instruct men; which that most evangelical Prophet thus sets forth: *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.* That he should be meek, and gentle, and compassionate toward men, in regard to their infirmities and afflictions; mild and lowly in his conversation, the Prophets also signify: *He shall*, saith Isaiah, *feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young: A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench:* and, *Behold*, saith Zechariah, *thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass.* That he should be of a quiet and peaceable disposition, nowise fierce or contentious, turbulent or clamorous, Isaiah declares, thus saying of him, (as St. Matthew cites him;) *He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.* To his admirable patience in bearing afflictions and contumelies, Isaiah thus renders express testimony; *He was oppressed,*

Ps. xlv. 6, 7.
Isa. xi. 5.
Isa. liii. 8.
Isa. xi. 2. liii. 11.
Isa. l. 4.
Isa. xl. 11.
Isa. xlii. 3. Matt. xii. 20.
Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xxi. 5.
Isa. xlii. 2. Matt. xii. 19.
Isa. liii. 7.

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and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. And, *I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* His invincible courage and resolution in God's service, together with his strong confidence in God and entire submission to God's will, is thus described by the same Prophet: *The Lord God*, saith he, *will help me; therefore I shall not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.— The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.* His general goodness and boundless charity toward men, the nature of his office and design, together with the whole course and tenor of his practice, such as they are represented, do suppose and imply.

Isa. l. 6.

Isa. l. 7, 5.

Now that Jesus (our Lord) did in his person fully correspond, and did by his practice thoroughly make good this moral high character; the story of his life with admirable simplicity and sincerity, without any semblance of disguise or artifice, represented by persons who most intimately were acquainted and long conversed with him, (or by persons immediately informed by them,) and with greatest constancy attested to and maintained by them, doth plainly shew; wherein his incomparable piety toward God, his readiness to fulfil all righteousness, his entire submission and resignation of himself to God's will, the continual fervency, (devotion of all kinds, prayer, thanksgiving, fasting, practised in the most intense degree and in the most reverent manner,) his pure and ardent zeal for God's glory, his stedfast resolution, and indefatigable industry in God's service (making it his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and to perform his work.)

Matt. iii. 15. Heb. x. 7. John xviii. 11. xii. 27. Matt. xxvi. 39. Matt. xiv. 23. xix. 13. xxi. 22. xi. 25. ix. 14. Luke vi. 12. xxii. 32, 41, 42. xxiii. 34. John xvii. 1, 6, 11, 7. xi. 41. vi. 11. John iv. 34. vi. 31. viii. 29. v. 30. ix. 4. xv. 10. xvii. 4.

Wherein an unspotted innocence, not only exempted from the vices and defilements, but raised above the vanities and impertinences of the world; secured by a mag-

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nanimous contempt, or [a] neglect and abstinence from all worldly grandeur and splendor; all secular wealth and profit, all bodily delight and ease, wherein an admirable wisdom and prudence, expressed in all his demeanour and his discourse; in his discerning the secret thoughts and dissembled intentions of men; in his declaring and defending truth, detecting and confuting errors; in baffling learned and wily opposers; in eluding captious questions, and evading treacherous designs; in not meddling with the secular affairs and interests of men; in not encumbering himself with the needless cares and occupations of this life, nor entangling himself in the snares of this world; in dexterously accommodating his behaviour and his speech to the dispositions, the capacities, the needs of men; to the circumstances of things and exigencies of occasion, so as did best conduce to the promoting his great design and undertaking; so that the people, observing his proceedings, could not but be astonished, and ask, [b] *Whence hath this man this wisdom?* so that they could not but acknowledge, *He hath done all things well.*

Wherein particularly an excellent faculty of speaking and teaching, of interpreting and applying the holy Scriptures, of proving and persuading God's truth, whereby he drew the people after him, converted many of them to amendment of life, convinced the most averse and incredulous; so that *all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and answers*; so that *all bare witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth;* so that the officers sent to apprehend him did confess, *Never man spake like this man.*

Wherein an invincible fortitude and gallantry, expressed in his most constant profession and undaunted maintenance of truth and goodness; in his encountering the prejudices, detecting the frauds, reproving the vices of the age, though upheld by the greatest persons and by prevalent factions; in his plain dealing and free speaking with all sincerity and all authority, in his zealous checking and chastising profane abuses; in his disregarding the rash and

[a] Matt. viii. 20. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Luke ii. 40, 52. Matt. ix. 4. xii. 10, 25. xxii. 18. xvi. 1. xix. 3. xxii. 18, 35, 46. John viii. 6. Matt. xxi. 27. xxii. 18. 34. John vi. 1. viii. 6. x. 39. Luke xx. 3. xxii. 4. xxx. 12, 24. Matt. xii. 14. Matt. xix. 5. Mark viii. 30. Luke xii. 14. xiii. 2. xiv. 7, 12. xviii. 17. xix. 11. John vii. 6. xvi. 4, 12. xi. 54. xvi. 27. iv. 10.

[b] Matt. xiii. 54. Mark vii. 37. John xii. 42. vii. 15. vii. 46. Matt. vii. 28. Luke ii. 47. iv. 42. John viii. 40. vii. 25, 26, 7. Luke xx. 46. xiii. 52. xvi. 15. Matt. xii. 14. xv. 13. xxiii. 19. xv. 6, 14. viii. 24. Luke xix. 45. John ii. 15. Luke ix. 22, 51. xviii. 32. xxii. 15. Matt. xvi. 21. xx. 17. Mark x. 33.

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nd opinions of men, their spiteful obloquies, harsh cen-
ures, slanderous imputations, and unjust reproaches; in
is foreseeing the greatest of dangers and worst of mis-
hiefs that could arrive to man, yet cheerfully encounter-
ng and firmly sustaining them; sustaining all the violent
ppositions and assaults which the most virulent malice
nd envy inflamed with superstition and blind zeal could
et against him.

Wherein a most quiet and peaceable disposition, appa-
ent from his never attempting any resistance, or any re-
enge upon provocation of frequent great affronts and in-
uries; from his never raising any tumults, nor fomenting
ny quarrels, nor meddling with any litigious matters,
or encroaching upon any man's right or office; by his
eady compliance with received customs, by his paying
ribute, although not due from him, to prevent offence;
y his frequent instructions and exhortations to peace, to
nnocence, to patience, to due obedience, to performing
ue respect to superiors, and paying customs to governors;
o the yielding a docile ear, and an observance to those
who *sat in Moses's chair*.

Wherein an exceeding meekness and gentleness, de-
monstrated in all his conversation; in resenting very mo-
derately, or rather not resenting at all, most unjust hatreds,
outrageous calumnies, bitter reproaches and contumelies
from his adversaries; very perverse neglects and ingrati-
tudes from multitudes of people; many infirmities, stupi-
lities, distrusts, basenesses and treacheries from his own
nearest friends and followers. In his passing over and
easily pardoning the greatest offences committed against
him, yea sometime extenuating and excusing them. In
the mildness of his censures, expostulations, and reproofs;
in his tempering the fierce zeal, hard censure, and rigor-
ous proceeding against persons unhappy, or faulty; in his
tender pity of all persons in any want, distress, or trouble;
in his earnest commiseration and bewailing the vengeance
he foresaw impendent on his persecutors, and in his pray-
ing for their pardon.

Matt. xxvi. 52. Luke xii. 14. Matt. viii. 4. Luke xvii. 14. Matt. xvii. 27. ix. 23. x. 16. Matt. xxii. 21. xxiii. 2. Matt. xi. 29. Matt. ix. 4, 34. xii. 25. x. 25. xii. 24. John xv. 19. x. 32. Luke iv. 24. Matt. xxvi. 50. xii. 25. xiv. 31. John vii. 12. vii. 20. viii. 48. x. 20. Matt. xvii. 17. xxvi. 56. Luke xxii. 46. xxiii. 34. xxii. 51. ix. 55. John viii. 7. Matt. ix. 36. xiv. 14. xv. 32. Luke vii. 13. ix. 41. xiii. 34. John xiii. 21. Luke xxiii. 34.

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Wherein a marvellous humility and lowliness of mind expressed by his not seeking [c] honour or applause from men, but shunning and rejecting it; his not assuming to himself, but ascribing all to God, and referring all to his glory, by his making no ostentation of his miraculous power and high endowments, but, so far as would comport with the prosecution of his main purpose, (the glory and service of God, the good and welfare of men,) carefully suppressing and concealing them; in his without dissatisfaction or discouragement bearing scorn, and contempt, and obloquy; in his willing condescension to the meanest offices and employments; in his free and familiar conversation with all sorts of people, with the lowest and most despicable, with the worst and most odious, for their good; he not despising the poorest or vilest wretch, who seemed capable of receiving any benefit from him; in his easiness to be entreated, and readiness to comply with the desires of any man imploring succour or relief from him; in his being ready, not only to oblige, but to be obliged and receive courtesies from any man; to answer the invitation of a Pharisee or of a Publican; to accept favourably the well-intended respect of a poor woman; in the softness and sweetness of his language to all men, particularly to his disciples; *Be of good courage, daughter; Son, be of good cheer; I say unto you, my friends; Little children, I am a little while with you.* Such was his style and conversation toward his inferiors.

[c] John v. 41. viii. 50, 54. vi. 15. viii. 28. xi. 4. xvii. 4. Luke vii. 16, 29. ix. 48. viii. 56. 39. xvii. 18. xviii. 43. Matt. viii. 4. ix. 30. xii. 16. xix. 17. Mark v. 43. viii. 23. Mat. ix. 24. John xiii. 4. Mat. ix. 10. viii. 3, 19. Luke v. 29. xv. 2. xix. 5. vii. 36. xi. 37. John xii. 7. Matt. xxvi. 10. ix. 2, 22. Luke xii. 4. John xv. 14. xiii. 33.

Wherein an unparalleled patience in contentedly and cheerfully, through all the course of his life, undertaking and undergoing whatever by God's will and providence was imposed on him, how grievous and distasteful soever to human apprehension or sense; the extremest penury, the hardest toil, the vilest disgraces, the most bitter pains and anguishes incident to body or mind, the most horrid and most sorrowful of deaths, all these aggravated by the conscience of his own clearest innocence, by the extreme ingratitude of those who misused

John xviii. 11. xii. 27. Matt. xxvi. 39. Matt. viii. 20. (2 Cor. viii. 9.)

im, by the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure for the ſin of man, y all the embittering conſiderations which a moſt lively iety and tender charity ſuggeſted; in ſubmitting to all his moſt freely and moſt calmly, without any regret, any iſturbance.

Wherein an unexpreſſible and unconceivable charity, (*a* *harity indeed which ſurpaſſeth knowledge*, as St. Paul peaketh,) evidenced in the conſtant ſtrain and tenor of his vhole life, paſſing through all his deſigns, all his words, nd all his actions: for διῆλθεν εὐεργετῶν, as St. Peter ſays n the Acts, he did nothing elſe, but *go about doing good*, nd benefiting men; curing their diſeaſes, relieving their vants, inſtructing their minds, reforming their manners, lrawing them to God and goodneſs, diſpoſing them to he attainment of everlaſting bliſs and ſalvation. It is ove, we may obſerve, which was the ſoul, that animated nd actuated him in all things; which carried him with unwearied reſolution and alacrity through all the cruel hardſhips and toils, through all the diſmal croſſes and ignominies he endured: his life was in effect but one coninual expreſſion of charity, (differently exerting itſelf according to various opportunities, and circumſtances, and needs of men,) the which was conſummated, and ſealed by his death; the higheſt inſtance of charity that could be; for, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.*

(*a* Eph. iii. 19.

Acts x. 38.

Matt. iv. 23. ix. 35.

John xv. 13.

Wherein, finally, (in which life, I ſay, of Jeſus,) all holineſs, all virtue, all goodneſs (ſuitable to him, who was to be not only the teacher and the perſuader of the beſt life, but a living ſtandard and pattern thereof; who was to merit of God in man's behalf, to conciliate God's favour towards us, and appeaſe his anger againſt us) do ſhine and ſparkle with a beauty and a luſtre tranſcending all expreſſion. All which particulars might, were it now proper and ſeaſonable, be thoroughly declared by inſtances extant in the evangelical hiſtory. So that the characteriſtical qualities of the Meſſias do clearly and abundantly agree to Jeſus our Lord.

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His performances ſhould next be conſidered and compared; but the time doth not admit, that we ſhould now proceed any farther.

Rev. v. 13. Now, *bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* Amen.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

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THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.

But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews, which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ.

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IN conformity to St. Paul's design and practice implied here, I have formerly propounded to explain and persuade these particulars. 1. What is the right notion and reason of this name or title, *Christ*. 2. That there was destinated to come into the world a Person, who signally, according to that right notion, should be *the Christ*. 3. That Jesus, whom we avow, is that Person, *the very Christ*. 4. In what manner, and upon what accounts, the New Testament representeth Jesus to be *the Christ*. 5. What application the point requireth.

In prosecution of which particulars, having dispatched the first and second, I did enter into the third, which is of highest consequence, beginning to declare that Jesus, our Lord, is *the Christ*, from the circumstances of his coming into the world, and from his personal qualifications; which having in some measure performed, I shall now proceed to declare the same from the exact correspond-

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ency of his undertakings and performances to those, which, according to ancient presignifications and prophecies, the Messias was designed to undertake and accomplish; together with the consequences of what the Messias was to do, and what answerably Jesus did effect.

1. One great performance of the Messias was, by inspiration and in the name of God, to make a complete discovery of divine truth; to publish a law of universal and perpetual obligation; to institute a religion consummate in all respects, which should correct the faults and supply the defects of all precedent dispensations, which should therefore be, as it were, God's last will and testament, after which no other revelation was to be expected: *I will*, said Moses of him, *put words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him; and it shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him*: by him Isaiah foretold, that *God shall teach us of his ways, and we shall walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem*: by him Jeremiah signified, that *God would put his law into the inward parts of men, and write it in their hearts*; it was, as it is said in Daniel, part of his work *to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy*; and his days in the prophets are commonly styled *the last days*, because, it seemeth, of the perfection of his doctrine, and immutability of his law; where such an entire instruction and final resolution in all points was commonly expected by the Jews, as the Samaritan woman did intimate; *I know*, said she, according to the current persuasion then, *that the Messias cometh; and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.*

Deut. xviii. 18, 19.

Isa. ii. 3.

Jer. xxxi. 33.

Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

Dan. ix. 24.

John iv. 25.

1 Tim. i. 1.

Now accordingly Jesus (*our hope*, and *author of our faith*) hath taught a doctrine, hath proclaimed a law, hath instituted a religion, which upon strict and careful examination will be found most perfect in all respects; such in its nature as cannot but indispensably oblige all that understand it; such as is worthy of God, and suitable to his designs of glorifying himself, and obliging his crea

are; in short, he hath been author of such an institution, as may be demonstrated the most excellent and complete that can be. For (briefly to shew this by considering the main, if not all imaginable excellencies of any region, law, or doctrine) it is impossible that any doctrine should assign a more true, proper, complete notion or character of God himself, more congruous to what reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, the purest tradition attesteth, or common experience doth intimate concerning God; more apt to breed in our hearts the highest affection and reverence toward him, or to engage us in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him; none can ascribe unto God higher perfections of nature, can more assert unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, can better commend and justify to us all his actions and proceedings, can represent him more amiable in his goodness, more terrible in his justice, more glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence; can consequently better direct or dispose us to render unto him a worship worthy of him and acceptable to him; can also therefore with more security and advantage commend unto us the imitation of him in our disposition and demeanour.

Nor could any doctrine more clearly and fully inform us concerning ourselves; concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, final; what the dignity of our nature is, for what purposes we were designed and framed, wherein our happiness doth consist, what shall be our state after death, how we shall be judged and dealt with then; the knowledge of which particulars is of so immense consequence, for the satisfaction of our minds and direction of our lives; concerning which therefore men in all times have so earnestly inquired and disputed, without any sure resolution but from hence.

Nor could a more accurate rule of life (more congruous to reason and suitable to our nature, or perfective thereof; more conducible to our welfare and our content; more apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the public benefit of all) have been prescribed; nothing can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or bene-

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ficial to us, than are the duties of piety (confiſtin love, reverence, gratitude, devotion, obedience, faith repentance toward God) which Chriſtianiſm doth rec No directions concerning our deportment toward neighbours and brethren can be imagined comparal thoſe (thoſe of hearty love, good-will, beneficence, paſſion, readineſs to forgive, meekneſs, peaceableneſ the like) which the Chriſtian law enjoineth. No pre or advices concerning the management of ourſelve ordering our ſouls and our bodies in their reſpective tions and fruitions) can be deviſed more agreeab ſound reaſon, more productive of true welfare an delight unto us, than are thoſe of being humbl modeſt in our conceits, calm and compoſed in our pa ſober and temperate in our enjoyments, patient and tented in our ſtate, with the like, which the Ch doctrine doth inculcate. No other method can ra up ſo near to heaven and happineſs as that which wi learn, of abſtracting and elevating our minds abov fading glories, the unſtable poſſeſſions, the vaniſhin lights of this world; the fixing our thoughts, affec and hopes upon the concernments of a better future

No religion alſo can be purer from ſuperſtitious a or freer from uſeleſs encumbrances (or from, as Tert calleth them, *buſy ſcrupuloſities*) than is this, (ſuch is in its native ſimplicity, and as it came from its au before the pragmatical curioſity, or domineering hu or covetous deſignings of men had tampered with only requiring a rational and ſpiritual ſervice, conſiſti performance of ſubſtantial duties plainly neceſſary or fitable; the ritual obſervances it enjoineth being, as few in number, in nature ſimple and eaſy to obſer evidently reaſonable, very decent and very uſeful, al inſtruct us in, apt to excite us to, the practice of wholeſome duties.

Negotioſæ ſcrupuloſitates. *Tert. in Marc.* lib. ii.

No religion alſo can have the like advantage of ſe before us a living copy and viſible ſtandard of good tice, affording ſo compendious an inſtruction, and ſe cacious an incitement to all piety and virtue: ſo

absolutely perfect, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for our imitation, and withal so strongly engaging us thereto, as the example of Jesus our Lord, such as it is in the Gospels represented to us.

Neither can any religion build our duty upon more solid grounds, or draw it from better principles, or drive it to better ends, or press it with more valid inducements than ours; which builds it upon conformity to the perfect nature of God, and to the dictates of his infallible wisdom, upon the holy will and most just authority of our natural Lord and Maker; which draweth it from love, reverence, and gratitude to God, from a hearty good-will to men, and from a sober regard to our own true welfare; which propoundeth God's honour, our neighbour's edification, and our own salvation, as the principal ends of action; which stirreth up good practice by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble God, express our thankfulness, and discharge our duty to him, obtain his mercy and favour, acquire present comfort of mind and future bliss, avoid regrets of conscience here, and endless torments hereafter.

Neither can any doctrine afford more encouragements to the endeavours of practising it than doth this, which tendereth sufficient help and ability toward the performance of whatever it enjoineth; offering (upon our seeking them or asking for them) God's infallible wisdom to direct us in our darknesses and doubts, God's almighty strength to assist us in our temptations and combats, God's loving spirit to comfort us in our afflictions and distresses.

Nor can any doctrine in a more sure or kindly manner appease and satisfy a man's conscience, so as to produce therein a well-grounded hope and solid comfort; to heal the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict, than doth this, which assureth us, that God Almighty, notwithstanding all our offences committed against him, is not only reconcileable to us, but desirous to become our friend; that he doth upon our repentance, and compliance with his gentle terms,

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receive us unto perfect grace and favour, discharging all our guilts and debts, however contracted; that our endeavours to serve and please God, although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere, shall be accepted and rewarded by him.

Such is the doctrine, law, and religion of Jesus; expressed in a most unaffected and perspicuous way, with all the gravity and simplicity of speech, with all the majesty and authority of proposal becoming divine truth; so excellent, and so complete in all respects, that it is beyond the imagination of man to conceive any thing better, yea, I dare say, repugnant to the nature of things that there should be any other way of religion (different substantially from it) so very good. God himself, we may presume to say, cannot infuse truer notions concerning himself and concerning us, cannot reveal more noble or more useful truths; cannot prescribe better laws or rules, cannot afford more proper means and aids, cannot propound more equal and reasonable terms, cannot offer higher encouragements and rewards, cannot discover his mind in a more excellent way than he hath done by Jesus, for his own glory and service, for our benefit and happiness: so that hence we may reasonably infer, that the doctrine taught, the law promulgated, the religion instituted by Jesus in God's name, are the very same which the predictions concerning the Messias do refer unto, as the last which should ever come from God, most full and perfect, universally and perpetually obliging.

2. Thus in general the prophets spake concerning the Messias's doctrine, and so that of Jesus correspondeth thereto: but of that doctrine particularly it was signified, that it should be very comfortable, joyful, and acceptable to mankind; as containing a declaration (peculiar thereto) of God's kind and gracious intentions toward us, overtures of especial mercy and love, dispensations of all sorts of spiritual blessings; the pardon and abolition of sins committed, peace and satisfaction of conscience, deliverance from spiritual slaveries and captivities; *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusa-*

Zech. ix. 9.

m: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: so Zechariah SERM. XVIII.
peaketh of his coming, and implieth the joyful purport of
is message: and, *How beautiful*, saith Isaiah, *upon the* Isa. lii. 7.
mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,
that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good,
that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God
reigneth! and, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because* Isa. lxi. 1.
the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the xlii. 1, 2.
meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to pro-
claim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison
to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of
the Lord, and the day of vengeance, or of recompence, as
the LXX. render it, *of our God; to comfort all that* ἐκδικήσεως.
mourn; to give unto them that mourn in Zion beauty for
ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for
the spirit of heaviness. It is a part of what God in Jere-
miah promised to dispense by him; *I will forgive their* Jer. xxxi.
iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. It is one 34.
of the Messias's performances, *to finish transgression, and* Dan. ix. 24.
to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for Ezek.
iniquity; to sprinkle clean water on God's people, and *to* xxxvi. 25, 29.
save them from their uncleannesses. In fine, the prophet Isa. xliv. 3.
Zechariah saith of his time, that *in that day there shall be* xliii. 25.
a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabi- Zech. xiii.
tants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. 1.

Now to all this the preaching of Jesus did exactly correspond; it being indeed, as it was named, a Gospel, or message of good and joy; declaring the special good-will of God, and his merciful willingness to be reconciled to mankind; offering peace and pardon to all that are sensible of their guilt, and penitent for their sin; imparting rest, comfort, and liberty to all that are weary and afflicted with spiritual burdens, grievances, and slaveries; taking off all grievous yokes of superstition, servility, and sin; and in their stead imposing a no less sweet and pleasant, than just and reasonable obedience; ministering all sorts of blessings needful for our succour, relief, ease, content, Acts xv. 32.
and welfare; wholly breathing sweetest love, (all kinds of Rom. v. 10.
love; love between God and man, between man and man, Rom. xiv. 17.

 Gal. v. 22.

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between man and his own conscience;) filling the hearts of those who sincerely embrace and comply with it, with present joy, and raising in them gladsome hopes of future bliss. It was indeed the most joyous sound that ever entered into man's ears, the most welcome news that ever was reported upon earth; news of a certain and perfect salvation from all the enemies of our welfare, from all the causes of mischief and misery to us; well therefore deserving that auspicious gratulation from the angel—*Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

Luke ii. 10

3. Collateral unto, or coincident with, those performances, (the teaching such a doctrine, publishing such a law, dispensing such blessings,) was the formal institution and establishment of a new, everlasting covenant, (different from all precedent covenants, and swallowing them up in its perfection,) a covenant between God and man, wherein God, entering into a most strict alliance and relation with us, should be pleased to dispense the blessings of spiritual illumination and assistance, of mercy and favour, of salvation and felicity; wherein we in way of condition, according to obligations of justice and gratitude, should

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pecial part thereof he expresseth thus; *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.* Of the same covenant God in Ezekiel speaketh thus; *I will set up one shepherd over them—and I will make with them a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them—and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore—they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.* Of the same, God thus declareth in Jeremiah, most fully and plainly reckoning the particular blessings rendered therein: *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more:* which words signify the tenor of that covenant on God's part to import, that God would impart a full and clear discovery of his will unto them, whom it should concern; that he would afford to them all requisite means and helps, qualifying them for the performance of their duty; that he would bestow on them (complying with the terms of this covenant, and performing their duty) an entire remission of all their sins, with an assurance of his constant and perpetual favour.

Isa. lv. 7.

Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 25. xxxvii. 26. xxxvi. 26, &c.

Jer. xxxi. 31, &c.

Now that Jesus did institute such a covenant, wherein all the benefits promised on God's part, and all the duties required on our parts, do punctually correspond to the terms of that predesigned by the prophets, is apparent by the whole tenor of the Christian Gospel; wherein a full

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declaration of God's will is held forth, so that no man (except out of wilfulness or negligence) can be ignorant thereof; wherein, upon condition of faith and repentance, God's mercy and pardon are exhibited and offered to all; wherein the communication of God's holy Spirit of grace (for directing and assisting the embracers of this covenant in the practice of their duty) is promised and dispensed; wherein on our part faith in God (or heartily returning to him) and faithful observance of God's laws are required; wherein God declareth a most favourable regard and love (together with very near and endearing relations) to those who undertake and conform to his terms; of which new covenant Jesus is represented the Angel, the Mediator, the Sponsor; having by his preaching declared it, by his merits and intercessions purchased and procured it, by his blood ratified and assured it to us.

Luke xxiv. 47. Acts v. 31. ii. 38. Heb. x. 29. Heb. ix. 15. xii. 24. vii. 22. viii. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 5.

4. In coincidence also with those performances, it is declared that the Messias should erect a kingdom spiritual in nature, universal in extent, and perpetual in duration; by the power and virtue whereof the enemies of God's people should be curbed and quelled; the subjects of which should live together in amity and peace, in safety and prosperity; wherein truth and righteousness should gloriously flourish. The chief testimonies of ancient Scripture predicting this kingdom I had occasion before to mention, and shall not repeat them now; only concerning the nature and extent thereof I shall add somewhat, serving for illustration and proof of our main purpose.

That it was to be a spiritual kingdom (not a visible dominion over the bodies and estates of men, managed by external force and co-action, but a government of men's hearts and consciences by secret inspirations, and moral instructions or persuasions) may be several ways collected and argued: it appeareth from the temper and disposition of its Founder, who was to be *a Prince of Peace*; of a peaceable, meek, patient, and humble disposition: it may be inferred from his condition, which was not to be a state of external grandeur and magnificence, but of poverty and affliction; for he was to be as he is described,

Isa. ix. 6.

mean and despicable in appearance; having *no form or comelinesſ, no beauty, that when we ſhould ſee him, we ſhould deſire him;* being *a man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief:* it alſo followeth from the events happening to him, which were not to conquer and triumph openly in view of carnal eyes; but to be *deſpiſed* and rejected, to be afflicted, oppreſſed, and ſlaughtered by men; the ſame we may learn from the manner of its eſtabliſhment and propagation; which was not to be effected by force and violence, but by virtue of a quiet and gentle inſtruction; by reaſonable words, not by hard blows: ſo doth the Prophet ſignify, when he ſaith of the Meſſias, that, *with righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he ſhall ſlay the wicked:* not by force of hands, or terror of arms, not in furious and bloody combats, but by the ſpiritual *rod of his mouth,* with the ſoft *breath of his lips* he was *to ſlay the wicked,* converting them unto righteouſneſs: ſo doth Daniel alſo imply when he ſaith, that *a ſtone cut out of the mountains without hands ſhould break in pieces and conſume all other kingdoms.* Yea the nature thereof itſelf doth argue the ſame; for the laws enjoined and duties required, the bleſſings miniſtered and rewards propounded therein are purely ſpiritual, not relating to a temporal ſtate, yea hardly conſiſting with ſecular domination; as may appear by attending to its fundamental conſtitution, or to the covenant ſettled between the Prince and ſubjects thereof; wherein the divine ſpirit and grace, light and knowledge, mercy and pardon for ſins, comfort of mind, and peace of conſcience, God's eſpecial love and favour, things merely ſpiritual, are expreſsly promiſed; but worldly power, wealth, and proſperity are pretermitted; and thence may juſtly be preſumed no ingredients, or appurtenances thereof. Indeed the conſtitution of a temporal or worldly kingdom, with viſible pomp and luſtre, ſuch as the Jews (a groſsly conceited and ſenſually affected people) did, miſtaking the Prophets, deſire and expect, had been a thing, as very agreeable to the carnal

Iſa. liii. 2, 3, 4, 7. xlix. 7. l. 6.

Iſa. xi. 4.

Dan. ii. 44, 45.

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or childish opinions of men, so in reasonable esteem of no considerable value, benefit, or use to mankind: such a domination could only have concerned the mortal part and temporal state of man; it could only have procured some trivial conveniences for our bodies, or gratifications to our sense: the settlement also, and preservation of such a kingdom (according to that vast extent and long duration which the Prophets imply) seemeth, without quite altering the whole frame of human nature, scarce possible; and reasons there are obvious enough, why it would not be expedient or beneficial for men: but the founding and upholding a spiritual kingdom (such as we described) is evidently of inestimable benefit to the nobler and more divine part of men; may serve to promote the eternal welfare of our souls; may easily, without changing the natural appetites of men, or disturbing the world, be carried on any where, and subsist for ever by the occult influences of divine grace; it consequently is most worthy of God to design and accomplish. Such a kingdom therefore was meant by the Prophets, being indeed no other than a church, or society of persons, with unanimous consent heartily acknowledging the one true God of Israel, Maker of heaven and earth, for their Sovereign Prince and Lawgiver; submitting themselves in all their actions to his laws and commands, expecting protection and recompence of their obedience from him.

As for the general extent of this kingdom, and the Messias's proceedings in settling and propagating it, that is also very perspicuously and copiously represented in the ancient Prophets, who declare that by him mankind (then immersed in deep ignorance and error, in wretched impiety and wickedness, in utter estrangement and aversation from God and goodness) should be reduced to the knowledge, worship, and obedience of God; that they should be received into God's protection, and should partake of his special favour; that all nations of men should by the Messias be enlightened with saving knowledge, and converted to the practice of true righteousness; that all men every where (all that would regard and observe his word,

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in God's design and desire, in effect a numerous com-
y of men) should by his means be aggregated to God's
urch, and rendered God's people; enjoying the bene-
and privileges suitable to that state or relation: in ex-
sing these things the ancient Scriptures are very preg-
t and copious: Moses, in that most divine song (en-
d by God himself, and uttered in his name) which seem-
to contain the history and the continual fate of the
ish people, doth foretell this, and concludeth his song
rewith; as with the last matter, which should happen
ing God's special relation to that people, importing
period of Judaism, or of the Israelitish theocracy.
oice, saith he, *O ye nations, with his people.* God in Deut. xxxii. 43.
second Psalm thus speaketh to the Messias: *Ask of* Rom. xv. 10.
and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, Psal. ii. 8.
the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession: and in
72d Psalm; *His name*, it is said, *shall endure for ever;* Ps. lxxii. 17.
name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men viii. 1.
l be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed;
hall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the
r to the ends of the earth: and otherwhere; *All the* Psal. xxii.
s of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; 27. lxxxvi.
all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee: 9.
, I will, saith God in Isaiah concerning him, *give thee* Isa. xlvi. 9.
a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation Acts xiii. 47.
he ends of the earth: and, *The glory of the Lord shall* Isa. xl. 5.
evealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth
he Lord hath spoken it: The Lord hath made bare his Is. lii. 10.
arm in the eyes of all nations; and all the ends of the Luke iii. 6.
h shall see the salvation of our God: and, *He shall not* Isa. xlii. 4.
nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the Rom. xv. 2.
h; and the isles (that is, the European nations) *shall*
t for his law: and, *In this mountain shall the Lord of* Isa. xxv. 6,
make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of 7.
e on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on
lees well refined; and he will destroy in this mountain
face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that
read over all nations: and, *In that day there shall be a* Isa. xi. 10.
of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people;

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to it shall the Gentiles seek; and its rest shall be glorious: and, *I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name:* and, *It shall come to pass in the last days,* say both Isaiah and Micah in the same words, *that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it:* and, *From the rising of the sun,* saith God in Malachi, *even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering:* and, *I,* saith God in Hosea, *will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say unto them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God: in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God:* and, *The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee,* saith God to his Church; *the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee: Fear not, for I am with thee; I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth:* and, *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear,* it is said to the Gentile Church; *break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord: Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations—for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles—for thy Maker is thine husband, (the Lord of hosts is his name;) and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The Lord of the whole earth shall he be called—The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose,* &c.

Isa. lxv. 1. Rom. ix. 24. Isa. ii. 2. Mic. iv. 1. Mal. i. 11. Hos. ii. 23. i. 10. Rom. ix. 26, 25. Isa. lx. 5. Isa. xliii. 5, 6. Isa. liv. 1—5. Gal. iv. 27. Vide Amos ix. 11, 12. Acts xv. 15. &c. Is. xxxv. 1.

Such is the nature and such the extent of the Messias's kingdom; now that Jesus hath erected and settled a

kingdom of a spiritual and heavenly nature, (the which is therefore in his Gospel styled the *kingdom of heaven*, the *kingdom of God*, the *kingdom of Christ*, the *kingdom that was to come*,) whereof God is the absolute Sovereign; the throne whereof is in heaven above, which beareth sway in the souls of men; wherein God governeth in effectual manner, (most righteously and sweetly, with admirable wisdom, justice, and clemency; with mighty power also, and awful authority,) according to most excellent laws, by his holy word, and powerful spirit; proposing most precious rewards to the obedient subjects thereof, and threatening dreadful punishments to the rebellious; protecting and saving the faithful people from all their enemies, (from the powers of darkness, from the temptations, allurements, menaces of the flesh and the world here, from death and hell hereafter;) that also Jesus (who, as Mediator between God and man, doth according to the Gospel, by authority derived from God, and in God's name, administer the government hereof) hath in effect been avowed as Lord and King; that his authority hath had great efficacy upon the minds and consciences of men; what noble trophies over sin and wickedness his word hath raised; in what glory and majesty through many ages he hath reigned, is evident from obvious records of history and from plain experience.

The extent of this spiritual empire raised by our Lord (of that doctrine which he taught, of that reformation which he introduced, of that Church, or spiritual society, knit together in faith and charity, which he founded, of that whole dispensation which he managed) is also thoroughly commensurate to the extent of whatever in these kinds the Messias was to achieve: the empire of Jesus in its nature and design, according to right and obligation, is declared universal and boundless, coextended with the world itself, and comprehending all generations of men; all nations being summoned to come under the wings of its jurisdiction; all persons being invited to partake the benefits, and enjoy the privileges thereof: *The Lord*, and *Judge of all men*; the *Saviour*, and *Redeemer of the*

Acts x. 35.

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world; the common *light of men*, and *Captain of* human *life;* are titles, which Jesus assumed to himself: *All things are delivered to me of my Father; Thou hast given him power over all flesh; All judgment is committed to the Son;* yea, *All power is given unto me in heaven and earth*— such is the authority he claimeth and asserteth to himself: *Going into the world, preach the Gospel to every creature; Go, and discipline all nations, baptizing them*— such was the commission and charge delivered by Jesus to his officers and ministers: *The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; The times of ignorance God having winked at, doth now invite all men everywhere to repent; God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins; God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, and to come to the acknowledgment of the truth; The Gospel hath been preached to every creature under heaven*—so do the Apostles declare the latitude of the evangelical dispensation according to its nature and design: so that well may we cry out with Clemens Alexandrinus, *Hearken ye that are afar off, hearken ye that are near; the word is not hid from any, it is a common light, it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian in respect to the Gospel.* So in design and of right is Jesus's doctrine and dispensation common to all nations and to all persons; all in duty are obliged to entertain it; all may have the benefit thereof, who are fit and willing to embrace it; it doth not indeed obtrude its benefits upon unwilling, and thence unworthy persons; it useth no unkindly violence, or rude compulsion; but it alloweth, it inviteth, it entreateth, it engageth all men to come, excluding only those from a participation therein, who will not hear its call; who do not like, or love it.

Matt. xi. 27. John xvii. 2. v. 22. iii. 35. Matt. xxviii. 18. Mark xvi. 15. Matt. xxviii. 19. Luke xxiv. 46. Tit. ii. 11. Acts xvii. 30. 2 Cor. v. 19. 1 Tim. ii. 4. Col. i. 23.

Ἀκούσατε οἱ μακρὰν, ἀκούσατε οἱ ἐγγύς· οὐκ ἀπεκρύβη τινὰς ὁ λόγος· φῶς ἐστι κοινὸν, ἐπιλάμπει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· δόδις Κιμμερίας ἐν λόγῳ. *Clem. Al. Protrept.*

In effect also this kingdom hath been very large and vast, a considerable part of the world having very soon been subjugated by its virtue, and having submitted thereto. *As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming* (or presence) *of the Son of man be;* said he concerning the sudden and effectual spreading of his doctrine; and the event answered

Matt. xxiv. 27.

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s prediction: for the evangelical light did in an in-
ınt dart itself all about, so as in many places to dispel
e night of ignorance, and to dissipate the fogs of wick-
lness: so that *the utmost ends of the earth* (of which ac-
ırding to the most literal sense we ourselves are a most
oper instance) are come under the possession and go-
ernment of Jesus; are reduced to the acknowledgment
ıd veneration of the only true God; do partake of
od's favour, and hope in his mercy; do with good con-
ience (in that measure which is expectable from the na-
ıral infirmity and pravity of man, in various degrees,
me more, some less strictly) serve God, and obey his
ws: a Church, and spiritual Zion, (spread over divers re-
ons and countries, consisting of several nations and lan-
uages,) compacted in good order and sweet communion,
ıth through a long course of times visibly flourished in
ompetent degrees of peace, prosperity, and glory; com-
ending and cherishing true religion, charity, and so-
iety; offering continual sacrifices of holy devotion unto
od, celebrating the divine name and praises; producing
any noble examples of all piety and virtue; a Church
all regards adequate to the prophetical expressions con-
erning that which was out of the whole world to be
ollected and constituted by the Messias.

Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61. p. 634.

5. If we do singly compare the particular consequences
ıd successes of the Messias's performances, expressed
r the Prophets; we shall find an exact correspondence to
hat hath followed the undertakings and performances of
ır Lord.

They tell us, that great opposition should be made
ainst it by the Jews and by the * Gentiles.

* Psal. ii. 1. Vid. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61. p. 637.

They tell us, that the Messias's person should be ac-
nowledged, worshipped, and blessed all over the world;
ll nations, say they, *shall serve him,—all nations shall*
ll him blessed: this we see for almost seventeen hundred
ears abundantly performed in respect to Jesus, by the
ily services of praise and thanksgiving yielded to him in
e universal Church.

Ps. lxxii. 11, 17.

They say, that the knowledge of God shall be far ex-

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tended and diffused over the world; *The earth*, say th
shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the wa
Isa. xi. 9. *cover the sea:* this we see fulfilled by the large propa
tion of Christian doctrine.

They affirm, that righteousness in the times of
Messias should commonly prosper, and be in high requ
Ps. lxxii. 7. lxxxv. 11. according to that; *In his days shall the righteous flouri*
so we see, that virtue and piety have, ever since Je
commended them to the world, enjoyed much repu
having been practised among the professors of his relig
in such degrees, and according to such manner, as
condition of this world, the humours of men, and the
ture of human affairs, do admit; nor reasonably can
prophecies be understood to mean farther.

They farther intimate, that upon the entertainment
the Messias's doctrine and law, abundance of peace
concord, of love and charity, of innocence and justi
should ensue; so that the fellow-subjects of this kingdo
Ps. lxxii. 7. lxxxv. 10. Isa. xi. 6. lxv. 25. ii. 4. lxvi. 12. although of different states and complexions, (the *wolf*
the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the lion and the ox,
asp and the young child; that is, the rich and the poor,
mighty and the weak, the fierce and the gentle, the cra
and the simple sorts of men,) should live and converse
gether amicably, safely, and pleasantly, without molesti
wronging, oppressing, and devouring; but rather helpi
Isa. xi. 5. lxv. 25. and benefiting each other; *They shall not*, saith the P
phet, *hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain:* to the ma
ing good of which particular, the doctrine of Jesus d
temper and compose the minds of those who do truly
derstand and embrace it: such as are Christians inde
(careful followers of Jesus's rules and example)
thereby disposed to maintain peace and amity betw
themselves, yea to perform all offices of charity and ki
ness to one another, although their conditions in
world, their complexions, their endowments and abilit
be however different; for the Christian doctrine represe
eth all that embrace it as fellow-servants of the sa
Lord, as brethren and children of the same Father,
members of the same body, as objects of the same div

ard and love, as partakers of the same privileges, pro- SERM.
ors of the same truth, consorts of the same hope, co- XVIII.
rs of the same glory and happiness, as thence united
allied to one another by the strictest bands and most
earing relations; hence it suppleth the stoutest heart,
. sweeteneth the fiercest tempers; it inclineth persons
highest state, power, wealth, knowledge, to conde-
nsive humility and meekness toward the meanest; this
son presently occurring to every Christian mind, that
Christian brother is indeed contemptible, can with-
folly, may without sin be contemned: whence al-
ugh Jesus's doctrine hath not quite removed wars
. contentions out of the world, yea not out of that part
reof which doth acknowledge him, (for that were a
ng impossible, without a total alteration of human na-
e, or rooting out of it those appetites of pride, volup-
uosness, self-love, and covetousness, which are the seeds
strife; the effecting which it cannot be supposed that
Prophets did intend,) yet hath it done considerably
ard it; it hath disposed many persons (many great
. considerable in the world) to a very just, innocent, and
ceable conversation; it hath kindled ardent love and
npassion toward all mankind in many hearts; it hath
duced great fruits of charity and bounty in persons of
sorts; it hath had no small influence upon the common
e of things, causing human affairs to be managed with
ch equity and gentleness, restraining outrageous iniqui-
and oppression.

t was also farther particularly foretold, that great
nces and potentates should submit to the Messias, seri-
ly avowing his authority over them, yielding vene-
ion to his name, and obedience to his laws; with their
wer and wealth promoting and encouraging the religion
ituted by him, defending and cherishing his faithful
ple: *All kings*, said the Psalmist of him, *shall fall* Ps. lxxii. 11.
fore him; all nations shall do him service: To a servant Is. xlix. 7,
rulers, said Isaiah also of him, *kings shall see and arise,* 23. lii. 15.
inces also shall do worship: and the same Prophet con-
ming his Church; *Kings*, saith he, *shall be thy nursing*

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fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet: The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising;—The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee;—Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of kings;—The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory.

Is. lx. 3, 10. 16.

Is. lxii. 2.

All this we see plainly to have been accomplished, for that soon the highest of earthly powers did submit and stoop thereto; that many great princes (great and glorious as even the world hath known any; such as Constantine, Theodosius, Charlemagne, and others of like illustrious renown) have willingly entertained Jesus's doctrine, and gladly undergone his yoke; that long successions of emperors and kings through the best frequented and most civilized part of the world have seriously professed themselves the subjects and servants of Jesus; expressing humble adoration of his person, and yielding observance to his laws; maintaining the profession of his religion by their power, supporting the ministers of it by their bounty, cherishing the practice thereof by manifold helps and encouragements; [a] they have seemed ambitious of titles drawn from performances of this nature, affecting and glorying to be styled, *Most Christian Kings*, *Catholic Kings*, *Defenders of the Faith*, and *Sons of the Church*.

It was also to be a particular consequence of what the Messias should do, that by virtue of his performances idolatry (that is, the worship of wicked spirits, or of fictitious deities) should in a conspicuous manner be vanquished, driven away, and destroyed; the worship of the only true God being substituted in its room: *The Lord alone*, saith Isaiah concerning his times, *shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish:* and, *It shall come to pass*, saith Zechariah, *in that day, saith the*

Isa. ii. 17, 18. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Zech. xiii. 2.

[a] Οὐ γὰρ ἀρνησαίμην ἄν, ἐφ' ᾧ μάλιστα χαίρω συνθιράπων ὑμίτερος πεφυκέναι. *Const. apud Eus. de Vit. Const.* iii.

Ἐγὼ ὁ συνθιράπων ὑμίτερος καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἶναι χαίρων. *Constant. apud Socr.* i. 9. *in Epist. ad Eccl. Alexandr.*

Lord of hosts, I will cut off the name of the idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembered; and also I will cause the Prophets, and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land. Now this we know was soon effected by the doctrine of our Lord, in a most remarkable manner: idolatry, in all places where it came, did flee and vanish before it; the Devil's frauds (whereby he so long had abused and befooled mankind) being detected, and that authority, which he had usurped over the world, being utterly disavowed; all the pack of infernal apostate spirits being not only rejected and disclaimed, but scorned and detested. Jesus (as the Gospel telleth us, and as experience confirmeth) did combat the *strong one*, did baffle and bind him; he disarmed and rifled him; he triumphed over him, and exposed him to shame; he cast him out, and dissolved all his works. At the appearance of Jesus's doctrine, and the sound of his name, his altars were deserted, his temples fell down, his oracles were struck dumb, his arts were supplanted, all his worship and kingdom were quite subverted. The sottish adoration of creatures (by the suggestion also of Satan, and by man's vain fancy advanced to a participation of divine honour) was also presently banished, and thrown away; the only true God (the Maker and Lord of all things) being thenceforth acknowledged and adored as the only fountain of good, and the sole object of worship.

John xii. 31. xvi. 11. Eph. ii. 2. 2 Cor. iv. 8. Col. i. 13. Acts xxvi. 18. Matt. xii. 29. Luke xi 21. Col. ii. 15. John xii. 31. xvi. 11. 1 John iii. 8.

Again, whereas in regard to all these performances the state of things constituted by the Messias is described so different from the former state of mankind, that it is called the creation of a new world: *For behold*, saith God in Isaiah concerning the Messias's times, *I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind*, (whence the Jews commonly before our Lord's time were used to call the Messias's time, *the world to come, the future age*;) it is plain that Jesus may well be esteemed to have accomplished the intent of those expressions; he (as the ἐπανορθωτὴς τοῦ κόσμου, the rectifier and rearer of the world, as Origen calleth him) having wrought so huge alterations in the minds,

Καιρὸς διορθώσεως. Heb. ix. 10. Isa. lxv. 17. lxvi. 22. xliii. 18.

Οἰκουμένη μέλλουσα. Heb. ii. 5.

Ὁ μέλλων αἰών. Heb. vi. 5.

Orig. in Cels. 3.

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and hearts, and lives of men, in their principles and opinions, in their dispositions and in their practices; having so changed the face of affairs, and reformed the course of things in the world; bringing men out of lamentable darkness and error into clear light and knowledge, rescuing them from superstition, impiety, and wickedness, and engaging them into ways of true religion, holiness, and righteousness; so many persons being apparently *renewed in the spirit of their minds;* being made *new creatures, created according to God in righteousness and true holiness;* so that, as the Apostle speaks, *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new;* so that what the contumacious Jews in anger and ill-will did call Jesus's instruments, had a true sense; they were οἱ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἀνατρέψαντες, they *who had turned the world upside down;* they did so indeed, but so as to settle it in a better posture.

Eph. iv. 23, 24.

2 Cor. v. 17.

Acts xvii. 6.

Concerning which good effects of Christian religion the ancient Christians had good reason to glory, and to say with Origen; *The adversaries of Christianism do not discern, how many men's diseases of soul, and how many floods of vices, have been restrained; and how many men's savage manners have been tamed by reason of the Christian doctrine; wherefore being satisfied with the public beneficialness thereof, which by a new method doth free men from many mischiefs, they ought willingly to render thanks thereto, and to yield testimony, if not to the truth of it, yet to its profitableness to mankind.*

Οἱ δὲ κατήγορα τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ οὐχ ὁρῶσιν, &c. *Orig. in Cels.* lib. i. p. 50. Vid. Chrys. in 1 Cor. i.

There remain behind several important considerations appertaining to this purpose, concerning the performances of the Messias, and events about him; his being to suffer grievous things from men, and for men; his performing miraculous works; the yielding various attestations from heaven to his person and doctrine; from the congruity of which particulars to what Jesus did endure and act; and to what God hath done in regard to him, the truth of our conclusion, that *Jesus is the very Christ,* will be manifest: but time now forbiddeth the prosecution of those matters; and I must therefore reserve it to other occasion.

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Now, *To him that is able to keep us from *falling, and to resent us blameless before the presence of his glory with* Jude 24, 25.
xceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory nd majesty, dominion and power, both now, and for ever.

* offending.

Unto the King †eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise 1 Tim. i. 17.
od, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

† of ages.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him Rev. v. 13.
hat sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever nd ever.

Salvation be unto our God which sitteth upon the throne, vii. 10.
nd unto the Lamb.

Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God or ever and ever. Amen. vii. 12.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and v. 12.
iches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, nd blessing.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in i. 5, 6.
is own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ver and ever. Amen.

SERMON XIX.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

ACTS ix. 22.

—Proving that Jesus is the Christ.

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WHAT is the true notion of the name or title *Christ*, we (in discoursing formerly upon this text) did explain. That one person, to whom that notion signally doth agree, was by God's especial determination to come into the world, we did also in the next place, from prophetical instruction (backed with the common tradition and current opinion of God's people) declare. We farther in the sequel did propound to shew, that Jesus (whom we acknowledge) was that very person; the Messias predicted by the prophets, and expected by the Jews. This we have already (in the foregoing discourses, proved from several circumstances of his birth and coming among men; from his personal qualifications, and from divers illustrious performances managed by him, in correspondency to what the prophets foretold concerning the Messias. The same we now proceed to confirm from other very considerable particulars foretold by them, and suiting to him; and first from those things, which the Messias was to undergo and suffer.

Acts iii. 18. Luke xviii. 31.

That the Messias was to come in a humble and homely manner, (without appearances of worldly splendour or

grandeur;) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness; that he was to be disregarded and despised by men; that he was to cause offences, and to find oppositions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be scorned and hated, to be disgracefully and hardly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted; yea, that at last he was to be prosecuted, condemned, and executed as a malefactor, is a truth which the Jews (although they firmly believed and earnestly expected the coming of a Messias) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits, yea inconsistent with the nature and drift of their religion, as they understood it. For their religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity, and prosperity as things highly valuable; did propound them as very proper (if not as the sole) rewards of piety and obedience; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard; they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction, and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell: they particularly did conceit, that to be rich was a necessary qualification to a prophet, (no less necessary, than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good life;) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem; the Spirit of God rests not upon a poor man,* (that is, no special communications of grace, wisdom, goodness, are ever by God afforded to persons of a low or afflicted condition,) was a rule they had framed, and which passed among them. That he therefore, who was designed to be so notable a prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore must be so highly favoured by God, should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd, could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had also (in congruity to those prejudices, abetted by that extreme self-love and

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self-flattery, which were peculiar to that nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the Messias was to come in a great visible state and power; to do acts of great prowess and renown, to bring the nations of the world into subjection under him, and so to reign among them in glorious majesty and prosperity. When Jesus therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications, and performances to the prophetical characters of the Messias) did appear, such as he did, with pretences (or intimations rather) that he was the Messias, their stomach rose at it, they were hugely offended at him, they deemed him not only a madman (one possessed or distracted) and an impostor, but a blasphemer; for to be no less than blasphemy they took it, for so pitiful a wretch to arrogate unto himself so high a dignity, so near a relation to God, as the being the Messias did import. We see even the Disciples of our Lord so deeply tainted with this national prejudice, that (even after they had acknowledged him to be *the Christ*) they could not with patience hear him foretelling what should befall him, (St. Peter, upon that occasion, even just after he had confessed him to be *the Christ*, did, as the text says, take him, and began to rebuke him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord.*) Yea, presently after that he most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of kingdoms, and being grandees in them; yea, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them; for even then they demand of him, whether he would *at that time restore the kingdom unto Israel*, (meaning such an external visible kingdom.)

Matt. xvi. 20.

Matt. xiii. 57.

Matt. xxvi. 65.

Matt. xvi. 22. xvii. 2. John xvi. 12.

Matt. xx. 21, 25.

Acts i. 6.

This hence of all *things notifying* the Messias seems to be the only particular which in general the Jews did not, or would not, see and acknowledge: and this caused them to oversee all *the rest*, how clearly soever shining in and about the person of Jesus. This cloud hindered them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being affected with the wonderfulness of his works; from minding or crediting all the testimonies ministered from heaven unto him.

Nisi enim ignoratus nihil pati posset. *Tert. in Marc.* iii. 6.

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This, as St. Paul tells us, was the great scandal which obstructed their embracing the Gospel. We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars, allege the general consent of God's people, in expounding the prophets according to our sense; this being one of those points, in respect to which the prophets did foresee and foretell their perverse stupidity and incredulity; that they should *look and not see, hear and not understand;* yielding herein special occasion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report?*

1 Cor. i. 23.
Vid. Tert. ibid.
Isa. vi. 9.
Ezek. xii. 2.
Matt. xiii. 13.
Acts xxviii. 26.
Isa. liii. 1.

Yet notwithstanding their (affected) blindness, there is no particular concerning the Messias, in the ancient Scripture, either more frequently (in way of mystical insinuation, or adumbration) glanced at, or more clearly (in direct and plain language) expressed, or which also by reasonable deductions thence may be inferred more strongly than this. St. Peter affirms, that *God had foreshewed it by the mouth of all his prophets* (not only of some, but *of all his prophets:*) the same our Lord himself did signify before his departure to his disciples out of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms, shewing them this particular, and opening their minds to understand the Scriptures concerning it; concluding his discourse to them thus, Ὅτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριςὸν, *Thus it was written, and thus ought Christ* (according to the prophetical presignifications and predictions) *to suffer.*

Acts iii. 18.
Luke xxiv. 44.

For the explaining and confirming of which truth, let us presume here to make a preparatory discourse or digression (not unseasonable perhaps, or improper to our purpose) concerning the nature of divine presignifications, which may serve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the ancient Scripture in the New Testament, (the which, together with others connected to them, or bearing analogy to them, we also, being assured of their design by the authority of our Lord and his Apostles, may safely presume after them to apply to the same purposes.) We may then consider, that the allwise God, (who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and to whom all things are present) having before eternal times, as St. Paul speaketh, determined in due time to

Eph. i. 11.
2 Tim. i. 9.
Tit. i. 2.
1 Cor. ii. 7.
Eph. i. 8.
iii. 9. Rom. xvi. 25. Col. i. 26.

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fend the Meſſias for accompliſhing the greateſt deſig
ever was to be managed in this world, (which ſhoul
the higheſt glory to himſelf, and procure the g
benefit to the principal of his creatures here,) did
incomprehenſible providence ſo order things, that
ſpecial diſpenſations preceding it ſhould have a f
dency and advantageous reference thereto; ſo that
it came upon the ſtage, it might appear, that the u
the plot conſiſted therein, and that whatever befo
acted, had a principal reſpect thereto. As therefor
the beginning of things God did in a gradual r
make real preparations toward it, by ſteps imparti
coveries of his mind about it, or in order to it, (fon
to Adam himſelf, more to Abraham and the patr
ſomewhat farther to Moſes, much more yet to di
the prophets among his choſen people, who no
foretold largely concerning it, but delivered ſeveral i
tions conformable to it, and nearly conducing
promoting thereof;) ſo he did alſo take eſpecial c
many appoſite *reſemblances*, handſomely inſerted i
his diſpenſations, to ſet it out, and to inſinuate his

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ed to have been such; the most signal things done by n, or befalling them, having been suited to answer ewhat that was remarkable concerning him; we may of them all, as the Apostle to the Hebrews says of Jewish priests; *They served to the* subindication and *lowing of heavenly things* (*οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσι τῶν ἐπουρανίων.*) In David particularly this rela- is so plain, that because thereof often (as we before ed) in the prophets, (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea,) the ssias is called by his name. It indeed well suited the ity of this great Person, and the importance of his ness, that he should have such notable ushers, heralds, harbingers *going before his face;* furnished with con- uous badges and ensigns denoting their relation to ; it was proper that God should appear always to have an express care and especial regard toward him. onsequently serves for our edification; for that we duly paring things, and discerning this admirable correspon- e, may be somewhat instructed thereby, and some- t confirmed in our faith; may be excited to the admi- n of God's wisdom and goodness, (so provident for good;) may also be induced thereby the more highly dore the Messias, and to esteem his design [c]. *All these gs* (saith St. Paul, having compared divers things con- ing Moses to things concerning Christ) *happened as s, and they were written for our admonition, on whom nds of the world are come.* It is also (for illustration, also for proof of these things) to be observed, that use those eminent servants of God were representatives hrist, many things are spoken of them as such; many gs are ascribed to them, which only or chiefly were nded of him; their names are used as veils to cover rs things concerning him, which it seemed not to di- wisdom convenient or seasonable in a more open and r manner to disclose promiscuously to all men, (why l should choose to express things of this nature in such

Heb. viii. 5.

Heb. viii. 5. x. 1. ix. 23. Gal. iv. 24. Col. ii. 17.

1 Cor. x. 11, 6.

Vid. de Script. Obs. et Proph. Chrys. tom. vi. p. 649, &c. et 658, &c.

Ὅτι δὲ ἡ αὐτοὶ τῆς τοῦ μόνου καὶ ἀληθοῦς Χριστοῦ τοῦ κατὰ πάντων βασιλεύοντος λόγου βασιλικῆς καὶ ἀρχικῆς ἐξουσίας τοὺς τύπους δι' ἑαυτοῦ ἔφερον. (*Euseb.* tc.)

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a manner, we need not to determine; it may be perhaps for reasons best known to himself, and above our ken or cognizance; yet probable reasons may be assigned for it, yea some more than probable being hinted in Scripture; it may be for a decent and harmonious distinction of times, of dispensations, of persons; it may be from the depth of things to conciliate a reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of doing so; it may be to exercise and improve men's understanding, to inflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them humble; it may be to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word; it may be for occasion of freely conveying special gifts of interpretation; it may be to conceal some things from some persons unfit or unworthy to know them, especially from persons haughty and self-conceited; it may be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great event, (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;*) it cannot be supposed necessary that all things should be plainly discovered to all persons; it is evident that some things are purposely couched in parabolical and mysterious expression; it is particularly the manner of prophetical instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season and every capacity: but to return from out of this parenthesis to our case.) That under the names of persons representing Christ (or of things we may add adumbrating his things) many things are intimated concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and to things also) which do not agree to them; many things were promised, which appear never accomplished, except after a very improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wideness of interpretation; such as doth not well suit to the nature of true histories and serious promises. Thus, for instance, are many things foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous estate of the Jewish church, which history and experience testify never (according to

Rev. ii. 7, &c. xiii. 18. xvii. 9. Matt. xiii. 9. xxiv. 15. Dan. ix. 1. John v. 39. Luke xxiv. 45. 1 Cor. xii. 10. xiv. 26. Eph. i. 9, 10.

Matt. xiii. 13. xi. 25. vii. 6.

Acts iii. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 8.

Isa. xxv. 8.

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rictness of literal acception, yea not in any tolerable degree near the height of what the words import) to have happened. Thus also, as the Apostle to the Hebrews well argueth, effects are attributed to the Jewish rites and sacrifices, which according to the nature of the thing cannot belong to them, otherwise than as shadows and substitutes of higher things. Thus also what is with solemn oath promised to Solomon (concerning the vast extent and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace, and prosperity; together with his mighty acts and victorious achievements) doth not appear directly in any competent measure to have been performed. Thus also David, as St. Peter observes and argues in the second of the Acts, speaketh many things of himself, which cannot be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him. Such things therefore are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future more perfect state of things under the Messias; to concern him (who was to be the end of the Law) and his dispensation, which was to contain the accomplishment of all things predicted and presignified. This is that which St. Austin signifies when he says, [d] *Which Christ* (saith he, *and what concerns him*)—*all the promises of that nation, all their prophecies, priesthoods, sacrifices, their temple, and altogether all their sacraments did resound, or express.*

Heb. x. 4.

Ps. xlv. lxxii. lxxxiii. &c.

Acts ii. 29.

Rom. x. 4. 2Cor. iii. 13. Luke xxii. 37.

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the New Testament, but they agree (as to their general importance) to the sense of the ancient Jews, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of Scriptures. They supposed a *midrash* or mystical sense of Scripture, which they very studiously (even to excess commonly) did search after. It was, as Lud. Capellus affirms, a confident and constant opinion of their doctors, that all things in Moses's law were typical, and capable of mystical exposition. And Philo's writings (composed in or immediately after our

In Exerc. ad Zohar.

[d] Quem Christum—omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetiæ, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, et cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt. *Aug. ad Volus. Ep.* iii.

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Matt. xxi. 9, 42. xxii. 32, 42.

Saviour's times) are a plain confirmation of what he saith; we have also several instances and intimations thereof in the New Testament. Neither probably would the Apostles in their discourses and disputations with the Jews have used this way of interpreting and citing passages of Scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Now these things being (cursorily) premised, we return into our way, and say, that the Messias's being to suffer was in divers passages of the ancient Scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing itself should be, there is a peculiar reason why it should be so represented, thus expressed by Tertullian: [e] *The sacrament indeed,* saith he, *of Christ's passion ought to have been figured in the* (ancient) *predications; forasmuch as that the more incredible it was, if it should have been preached nakedly, the more offensive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be shaded, that the difficulty of understanding it might cause the seeking of God's grace.* Supposing also it should be, the passages about Abel, Isaac, Josias, Jeremiah, (and the like,) may congruously be applied thereto; the elevation of the brazen serpent, and the killing of the paschal lamb, may appositely represent it; the Jewish priests, with all their sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in and accommodated thereto: these things are not indeed by themselves alone apt peremptorily to evince that it should be; yet do they handsomely suit it, and adorn the supposition thereof, according to the notion we touched about the typical relation between the matters of the old world before the Messias, and those of the new one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the Messias's sufferings were implied in the afflictions of his representative king David, such as he in several Psalms (the 35th, 69th, 109th, 118th, and especially in the 22d Psalm) describeth them: wherein divers passages (expressing the extreme sadness and for-

[e] Utique sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in prædicationibus oportuerat; quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum futurum; quantoque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum, ut difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quæreret. *Tertull. in Judæos*, cap. 10.

nnesſ of his condition) occur, which by the hiſtory of s life do not ſo well, according to the literal ſignifica- n of words, appear congruous to his perſon; which erefore there is a neceſſity, or (at leaſt) much reaſon, at they ſhould be applied to the Meſſias, whom David d repreſent.

Which being admitted, comparing then the paſſages e have there to what befell Jeſus, we ſhall find an admi- ble harmony, there being ſcarce any part of his affliction his life, or any circumſtance thereof at his death, which not in emphatical and expreſs terms there ſet out.

here we have expreſſed his low and deſpicable eſtate; (*I a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and de- iſed of the people.*)—The cauſeleſs hatred and enmity of e populacy and of the great ones toward him; (*They at hate me without a cauſe are more than the hairs of my ad; they that would deſtroy me, being mine enemies rongfully, are mighty: they compaſſed me about with rds of hatred, and fought againſt me without a cauſe.*—) ne ingrateful requital made to him for all the good done him, and intended by him; (*They rewarded me evil for od, and hatred for my love*)—Their rejecting him; (*The ne which the builders refuſed is become the head ſtone in corner*)—Their inſidious and calumnious proceedings ainſt him; (*Without cauſe have they hid for me their t in a pit, which without cauſe they have digged for my l:* and, *Falſe witneſſes did riſe up; they laid to my rge things that I knew not:* and, *The mouth of the cked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened againſt g they have ſpoken againſt me with a lying tongue*)—

Pſ. xxii. 6.

Pſ. lxix. 4. xxxv. 7. cix. 3.

Pſ. xxxv. 12. cix. 5. cxviii. 22.

eir bitter inſulting over him in his affliction; (*But in ne adverſity they rejoiced, and gathered themſelves toge- r; yea the abjects gathered themſelves together againſt s They perſecute him whom thou haſt ſmitten, and they k to the grief of thoſe whom thou haſt wounded:* καὶ τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, *and to the ſmart of wounds they added*, ſay the LXX.)—Their ſcornful iling, flouting, and mocking him; (*All they that ſee laugh me to ſcorn; they ſhoot the lip; they ſhake the*

Pſ. xxxv. 7, 11. cix. 2.

Pſ. xxxv. 15. lxix. 26.

Pſ. xxii. 7, 8.

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head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him. I
Ps. cix. 25. *became a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me,*
xxxv. 21, 16. *they shaked their heads. They opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, Aha! our eye hath seen it.* Ἐπείρασαν με, ἐξεμυκτήρισάν με μυκτηρισμὸν, ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τὸς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν· *They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me*)—The cruel manner of their
Ps. xxii. 16. dealing with him; (*Dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me*)—Their dealing with him, when in his distress he call-
Ps. lxix. 21. ed for some refreshment; (*They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink*)—Their
Ps. xxii. 18. disposal of his garments upon his suffering; (*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture*)—His being deserted of his friends, and destitute of all con-
Ps. lxix. 8, 20. solation; (*I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children: I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none*)—The sense of God's
Ps. xxii. 1. lxix. 17. withholding his favour and help; (*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me?*)—His charitable disposition and behaviour toward
Ps. xxxv. 13. his persecutors; (*But as for me, when they were sick,* (or as the LXX. *when they did trouble me,* Ἐν τῷ αὐτὸς παρενοχλεῖν μοι,) *my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled myself with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom: I behaved myself as though it had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*) Which passages and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the Gospels, I need not to shew; we do all, I suppose, well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable history, to be able ourselves to make the application.

But there are not only such oblique intimations, shrouded under the coverture of other persons and names, but direct and immediate predictions concerning the Messias's being to suffer most clearly expressed. That whole fa-

mous chapter in Isaiah (the 53d chapter) doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends, and consequences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically represented. His appearing meanness; (*He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him*)—The disgrace, contempt, repulses, and rejection he underwent; (*He is despised and rejected of men—we hid our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not*)—His afflicted state; (*He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*)—The bitter and painful manner of his affliction; (*He was stricken; bore stripes, was wounded, was bruised*)—His being accused, adjudged, and condemned as a malefactor; (*He was taken from prison and from judgment—he was numbered among the transgressors*)—His consequent death; (*He poured out his soul unto death; He was cut out of the land of the living*)—The design and end of his sufferings; they were appointed and inflicted by Divine Providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the expiation of our sins, and our salvation; (*It pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin:—He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed:—Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:—For the transgression of my people he was smitten:—The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all*)—His sustaining all this with a willing patience and meekness; (*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth*)—His charitable praying for his persecutors; so that may be understood, (*He made intercession for the transgressors*)—The consequence and success of his sufferings; (*He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his*

Isa. liii. 2. ver. 3. ver. 3, 4. ver. 5, 8. ver. 8, 12. ver. 12, 8, 7. ver. 10, 5, 4, 8, 6, 12. ver. 7. ver. 12. ver. 10, 11, 12.

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knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; and, *I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.*) Which passages as they most exactly suit to Jesus, and might in a manner constitute an historical narration of what he did endure, together with the opinions taught in the Gospel concerning the intent and effect of his sufferings; so that they did (according to the intention of the Divine Spirit) relate to the Messias, may from several considerations be apparent; the context and coherence of all this passage with the precedent and subsequent passages, which plainly respect the Messias, and his times: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!* and, *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently*, &c. are passages immediately going before, of which this 53d chapter is but a continuation; and immediately after it followeth, *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear*, &c. being a very elegant and perspicuous description of the church augmented by accession of the Gentiles, which was to be brought to pass by the Messias. The general scope of this whole prophecy argues the same; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other person imaginable beside the Messias doth farther evince it; so high are the things which are attributed to the suffering person; as that he should *bear the sins* of all God's people, and heal them; that he should *by his knowledge justify many;* that *the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand;* that God would *divide him a portion with the great*, and that he should *divide the spoil with the strong;* the magnificency and importance of which things do well agree to the Messias, but not to any other person: whence if the ancient Jews had reason to believe a Messias, they had as much reason to apply this place to him as any other, and to acknowledge he was to be a great sufferer; and indeed divers of the ancient Targumists and most learned Rabbins did expound this place of the one Messias that was to come, as the Pugio Fidei and other learned writers do by several testimonies shew. This place also discovers the vanity of that figment devised by some

Isa. lii. 7, 13.

later Jews, who, to evade and oppose Jesus, affirmed there was to be a double Messias, (one who should be much afflicted, the other who should greatly prosper,) since we may observe that here both great afflictions and glorious performances are ascribed to the same person. SERM. XIX.

The same things are also by parts clearly predicted in other places of this prophet, and in other scriptures: by Isaiah again in the chapter immediately foregoing; *Behold*, saith he, *my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high*, (there is God's servant (be that is in way of excellency such, that is, in this prophet's style, the Messias) in his real glorious capacity; it follows, concerning his external appearance,) *his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:* and again, in the 49th chapter, *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One; To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.* What can be more express and clear, than that the Messias, who should subject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknowledgment and adoration of himself, was to be despised by men, to be detested by the Jews, and to appear in a servile and base condition? The same prophet again brings him in speaking thus: *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* His offending the Jews and aggravating their sins is also expressed by this same prophet; *And*, saith he, *he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.* The opposition also he should receive is signified in the 2d Psalm; *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.* The prophet Zechariah doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings: his low condition in those words; *Behold, thy King cometh unto thee lowly*, (*pauper*,) *and riding upon an ass*: his manner of death in those; *Awake, O sword, against my*

Isa. lii. 13, 14.

Isa. xlix. 7.

Isaiah l. 6.

Isa. viii. 14.

Psal. ii. 2.

Zech. ix. 9.

Zech. xiii. 7.

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shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and again; *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn,* &c. The prophet Daniel also in that place, from which probably the name Messias was taken, and which most expressly mentions him, saith, that *after threescore and two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself.* Now from these passages of Scripture we may well say with our Lord; Ὅτι ὅτω γέγραπται, καὶ ὅτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστόν· *That thus it was written, and thus,* according to the prophet's foretelling, it was to happen, that the *Messias should suffer;* suffer in a life of penury and contempt, in a death of shame and sorrow.

Zech. xii. 10.

Dan. ix. 26.

Luke xxiv. 26.

That it was to be thus might also be inferred by reasons grounded on the qualities of the Messias's person, and the nature of his performances, such as they are described in the Scripture. He was to be really and to appear plainly a person of most admirable virtue and good worth; but never was there or can be any such, (as even Pagan philosophers, Plato, Seneca, and others, have observed) without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an universal pattern to men of all sorts, (especially to the greatest part, that is, to the poor,) of all righteousness; to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty, (humility, patience, meekness, charity, self-denial, entire resignation to God's will;) this he should not have opportunity or advantage of doing, if his condition had been high, wealthy, splendid, and prosperous. He was to exercise pity and sympathy towards all mankind; the which to do it was requisite he should feel the inconveniences and miseries incident to mankind. He was to advance the repute of spiritual and eternal goods; and to depress the value of those corporeal and temporal things, which men vainly admire; the most ready and compendious way of doing this was by an exemplary neglecting and refusing worldly enjoyments, (the ho-

nours, profits, and pleasures here.) He was by gentle and peaceable means to erect a spiritual kingdom, to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love and obedience of God, to raise in men the hopes of future rewards and blessings in heaven; to the accomplishment of which purposes temporal glory had been rather prejudicial than conducible. He was to manage his great designs by means supernatural and divine, the which would be more conspicuous by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was to merit most highly from God for himself and for men; this he could not do so well, as in enduring for God's sake and ours the hardest things. He was to save men, and consequently to appease God's wrath and satisfy his justice, by the expiation of our sins; this required that he should suffer what we had deserved. But reasons of this kind I partly before touched, and shall hereafter have occasion to prosecute more fully in treating upon the article of our Saviour's passion.

Now that Jesus (our Lord) did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared concerning the Messias, we need not by relating minutely the known history of his life and death make out farther; since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adversary will deny it. I conclude this point with St. Peter's words, (for the illustration and proof of which this discourse hath been made;) *But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.* Acts iii. 18.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XX.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

JOHN v. 37.

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me.

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JESUS, our Lord, here and in the context doth affirm, that Almighty God, his Father, had granted unto him several kinds of extraordinary attestation, sufficient to convince all well-disposed persons, unto whom they shall be discovered, that he truly was that Messias, whom God before all beginning of time had designed, and frequently by his Prophets had promised to send for the reformation of the world and salvation of mankind: to represent those several ways of divine attestation with some reflections on them, serving both to the confirmation of our faith, and improving our affection and our reverence thereto, is my chief design at this time.

But first, in preparation to what we shall say concerning those particulars, and for declaration of the divine wisdom in this manner of proceeding, I shall assign some reasons, why it was requisite that such attestations should be afforded to our Lord.

1. The nature of the Messias's office required such attestations; for since he was designed to the most eminent employment that ever was or could be committed to

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person; since he was to reveal things no less great important, than new and strange; since he was to ıe a most high authority unto himself; since he was eak and act all in the name of God; since also all under great penalties were obliged to yield credit ɔbedience to him, there was great reason that God d appear to authorize him; that he should be able to uce God's hand and seal to his commission; for that rwise he might have been suspected of imposture; his ine might have been rejected, his authority disclaim- and his design frustrated, without great blame, or ever without men's being convincible of blame: for might the people suspect that person, who, professing ɔme in such a capacity an extraordinary agent from en, brought no credentials thence, (no evidence of 's especial favour and assistance;) well might they re- that new doctrine, which God vouchsafed not by any l testimony to countenance; well might they dis- ı that authority, which offering to introduce so great vations (to repeal old laws, to cancel settled obliga- , to abolish ancient customs; to enact new laws and , exacting obedience to them from all men) should ɔe able to exhibit its warrant, and shew its derivation heaven: well might such peremptory assertions and nfident pretences, without confirmations answerable in ht, beget even in wise men distrust and aversation. reasonableness and excellency of his doctrine, the ence and sanctity of his life, the wisdom and persua- ess of his discourse would not, if nothing more divine d attend them, be thoroughly able to procure faith submission; they would at best have made his pre- ı to pass for the devices of a wise man, or the dictates good philosopher. They were therefore no unrea- ɔle desires or demands (if they had proceeded from a ı meaning, and had been joined with a docile and able disposition) which the Jews did make to our ; *Master, we would see a sign from thee; what sign fore dost thou do, that we may see, and believe thee? dost thou work? what sign dost thou shew to us, that*

Deut. xviii. 19. Acts iii. 22.

John vi. 27.

John ii. 18. vi. 30. Matt. xii. 28. xvi. 1. Mark viii. 12.

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thou doest these things? that is, how dost thou prove thy doctrine credible, or thy authority valid, by God's testimony and warrant? This challenge our Lord himself acknowledged somewhat reasonable; for he not only asserts the truth of his doctrine and validity of his commission by divine attestation, (in words and works,) nor only exhorts them to credit him upon that account, but he also plainly signifies that his bare affirmation did not require credit, and that if he could produce no better proof, they were excusable for disbelieving him: *If*, saith he, *I witness of myself, my witness is not true;* not true, that is, not credible; or not so true, as to oblige to belief: and *If I do not the works of my Father*, (that is, works only imputable to God's extraordinary power,) *believe me not;* that is, I require no belief from you: yea, he farther adds, *If I had not done the works among them, which no man else had done, they* (the incredulous people then) *had not had any sin;* that is, had not been culpable for unbelief. It was then from the nature of the Messias's office and undertaking very necessary, that he should have attestations of this kind; and our Lord himself, we see, declines not, but aggravateth his pretences with this necessity.

John viii. 16, 29. x. 25. v. 32, 36.

John v. 31.

John x. 37.

John xv. 24.

2. The effects which the Messias was to produce did require extraordinary attestations and assistances from God. He was to achieve exploits of the greatest difficulty conceivable; far surpassing all that ever was by any person undertaken in the world before: he was to vanquish all the powers, and to confound all the policies of hell; he was to subdue and subjugate all the world; to make the greatest princes to stoop, and to submit their sceptres to his will; to bring down the most haughty conceits, and to break down the most stubborn spirits, and to tame the wildest passions of men; he was to expel from their minds most deeply rooted prejudices, to banish from their practice most inveterate customs, to cross their most violent humours, to thwart their interests, to bear down their ambitions, to restrain their covetous desires and their voluptuous appetites; he was to persuade a doctrine, and to

Ἀνάστυξον τῇ διανοίᾳ, καὶ ἐνίησον ἡλίκον ἐστὶ τὴν ὑφ' ἡλίῳ κειμένην ἅπασαν, &c. *Chrys.* tom. vi. Or. lxi. p. 634.

mpose a law, very opposite to the natural inclinations, to he current notions, to the worldly advantages, the liberies, emoluments, and enjoyments of all, or of most, or of many people; he was, in short, so to reform the world, as in a manner quite to alter the whole frame of it, and all the course of affairs therein; things which surely it were a madness to enterprise, and an impossibility to accomplish, without remarkable testimonies of the divine presence, especial aids of the divine power, and large influences of the divine Spirit communicated to him; without, as St. Peter phraseth it, *God were with him;* these things were not effectible by means natural and ordinary, by human wit or eloquence, by good behaviour or example, by the bare reason or plausibility of doctrine, by the wise conduct or industrious management of the design; no, such means have by many experiments appeared insufficient to bring about much lesser matters; nothing under the wisdom of God directing, the power of God assisting, the authority of God establishing and gracing his endeavours in an eminent and evident manner, could enable the Messias to bring these mighty things to pass.

Acts x. 38. John iii. 2.

3. We may farther consider, that *the Christ* was designed to present himself first to the Jews, (in the first place imparting the declarations of God's will and gracious intentions to them, his ancient friends and favourites;) that is, to a people wholly addicted to this sort of proof, and uncapable of conviction by any other: they did not, as did *the Greeks, seek wisdom,* but *required a sign,* as St. Paul observed of them; they were not so apt to inquire after the intrinsic reasons of things, as to expect testimonies from heaven; nothing else was able to persuade them; so our Lord expressly saith; *Jesus said unto them, If you do not see signs and prodigies, you will nowise believe:* in consequence of which disposition in them, we see by passages in the New Testament, that they expected and believed the Messias should come with such attestations and performances; so their importunate demanding of signs upon all occasions from our Lord doth signify, and so those words in St. John do imply; *And many of the peo-*

1 Cor. i. 22. John iv. 48. John vii. 31.

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ple believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these, which this man doeth? where we may observe both their expectation of miraculous works from the Messias, and the efficacy which such works had upon them. The condition also of the Gentiles, unto whom his design in the next place did extend, seemed to require the same proceedings: for all other methods of instruction and persuasion had before often been applied to them by philosophers and by politicians, for instilling their notions and recommending their laws; they had been so inured to subtile argumentations and plausible discourses, that the bare use of them was not likely to have any extraordinary effect upon them: if the Messias therefore should bring no other confirmation with him unto them, he would seem to deserve no higher regard or credit, than other doctors or lawgivers, which had appeared among them; and as easily would he be declined, and put off by them: whence reasonably it may be supposed, that for accommodation to the genius and the capacities of those upon whose hearts he was to make impression, the Messias should come furnished with such special testimonials and powers from God. Especially considering that,

Orig. cont. Cels. viii. (p. 408.)

4. It was agreeable to God's usual method of proceeding in cases resembling this, although much unequal thereto in weight and consequence. There was never any more than ordinary discovery made to men by God, never any very considerable business managed by divine providence, never hardly any eminent person appeared with a pretence of coming from God for the prosecution of such purposes, without God's visible interposal and abetment. This hath always been the authentic seal, whereby he hath wonted to authorize the messengers sent from himself for transacting affairs of an unusual and very weighty nature; whereby his true ambassadors have been distinguishable from ordinary persons, or from deceitful pretenders, who have offered to impose their own devices upon men: to a person bringing with him this sort of assurance (except when his tale is evidently false and vain,

John vi. 27.

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his design notoriously wicked and mischievous) God h always required, that a ready credence and obe- nce should be yielded; taking it for a high affront to nself (no less, as St. John says, than *giving him the lie*) disbelieve such a person, and for a heinous contumacy disobey him: that it hath been God's ordinary thod, the course of divine history shews. When God arated the Patriarchs for the preservation and pro- gation of his true religion, he manifested an especial sence with them, frequently appearing to them, visibly ting and blessing them in a more than ordinary man- , enduing them with a prophetical discretion and fore- it of things: when he would rescue the seed of those friends from cruel oppression and hard slavery, (design- also by them to maintain and convey down the fin- : way of piety,) he imparted also unto Moses, the espe- instrument of those purposes, a power of doing won- s, thereby procuring authority to his person, and credit his pretences. Moses did well perceive, and judge, : had he come without such attestation he should not e been received or regarded: *But, behold,* said he, *t will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice; for they l say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee:* wherefore l furnished him with such a power of doing such gs as should assure the truth of his message; the effect reof is thus expressed; *Israel saw that great work, ch the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people ed the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant ses:* to the promulgation of the Law, and establishment hat particular covenant with the Israelites, God did exhibit significations of his presence in a most evident affecting manner: *Lo,* said God to Moses, expressing matter and its design, *I come unto thee in a thick d, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, believe thee for ever.* And in the whole conduct of people toward Canaan, God for those ends vouch- l by Moses to perform very great and prodigious gs; which we may see reckoned up in the 78th and th Psalms, and in the 9th of Nehemiah. So also

1 John v. 10. John iii. 33.

Gen. xxi. 22.

Exod. iv. 1.

Exod. iv. 5, 31. xiv. 31. Deut. iv. 34. v. 15. vii. 19. iv. 35, 39.

Exod. xix. 9. Neh. ix. 13.

Ps. lxxviii. 14. cv. 39. Neh. ix. 15.

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when God employed Elias to sustain the remainders of decayed piety in Israel against the countenance of power given to wickedness, and against the stream of popular use, he endued him with a liberal measure of his Spirit, and a power of doing great miracles: the like may be observed of all the Prophets, Judges, and Princes, who upon special occasions were raised to perform considerable services for the glory of God and the good of his people. This therefore being God's constant practice, it cannot but be well supposed, that in this case he would not withhold his attestation, but would afford it in a most plentiful measure to that person who was in dignity so far to excel all other his envoys and agents; whose undertaking should in importance so vastly transcend all others, that ever were set on foot in the world; to him, who was to free, not one small people only, but all mankind, not from a temporal slavery in Egypt, but from eternal misery in hell; to promulge, not a pedagogy of ritual observances, but a law of spiritual righteousness; to establish, not a temporal covenant for a little spot of earth, but an everlasting testament for all the world, importing endless beatitude in heaven. God therefore surely would not balk his road upon such an occasion, nor refuse his especial testimonials to so great a personage, and to so good a design.

5. If we consider the general reasons assignable, why God hath been wont to proceed in this manner, or why he should use it upon any occasion, they are with strongest force applicable to this case. The most general reasons why God doth ever interpose extraordinarily, or produce works supernatural, are, to assert palpably his own divinity and providence; strongly to encourage devotion and piety in men: for he by suspending or thwarting the course of nature plainly declareth himself the maker and master thereof; that he freely made the world, and freely doth uphold it; that he hath not tied his own hands, nor confined his power within limits; but is superior to and free from all laws, excepting those of indefectible holiness and goodness; and consequently that all things do not pro-

ceed in a track of dead fatality. He thereby also assureth us, that he hath an especial regard unto and a care over men, and wisely ordereth human affairs by his providence, frequently (as wisdom directeth and occasion requireth) interposing his hand for the succour, encouragement, and reward of good men; that therefore it is not vain to hope and trust in him; that prayers and devotions are available to procure good from him; that repentance and obedience are no less profitable for us, than acceptable to him; that also he freely and justly dispenseth recompences suitable to men's actions voluntarily performed; that in fine there is a foundation of religion, and a ground of justice between God and man: these things are most evidently and effectually demonstrated by extraordinary attestations; and when therefore could they more seasonably be used, than when God by the Messias intended to call all the world to the acknowledgment and obedience of himself, to the practice of all piety and goodness, with assurances of fit reward, in regard to such practice? If farther to excite men's attention and regard, to breed awe and reverence in men's minds, to confound the impudence, and to bend or break the obstinacy of men, are main ends and proper effects of such testimonies; whether we consider the Messias's person, the nature of his undertaking, or the persons with whom he was to deal, it is plain (as we have shewed) that his business would best deserve and most need them: no dispensation could better deserve them for worth and consequence; none could more need them for greatness and difficulty.

Such reasons may be assigned for the necessity and usefulness of divine attestations in this case: but in opposition to these discourses, and in derogation to this way of confirming any truth or authority, it may be said, that no such testifications can well serve to such purposes; for that the like have been and may be applied to the persuasion of error and impiety by *false prophets* and *antichrists*, by *magicians* and *wizards*; who not only have cunningly counterfeited, but really executed very prodigious and wondrous things, in a manner unaccountable

Deut. xiii. 30. Matt. xxiv. 24. 2 Theſſ. ii. 2.

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to human philosophy. Since also there are wicked spirits, in subtilty and power far exceeding us, who are able easily to divert the natural course of things; and the limits of whose power in working so, it is hard for us to discern or define; [a] how can we be assured, that what is done in this kind doth not proceed from them, but from a virtue divine? how can it be a certain and convincing argument of truth? may we not here object that of Tertullian, saying, that *our Lord pronouncing that many impostors should come, and do miracles, shewed thereby the faith grounded on miracles to be temerarious* [b].

Aug. de Civ. Dei, x. 16.

To this suggestion we may in general return, that seeing the doing such things is the chief and most effectual way whereby God, beyond the resistance of doubt or dispute, can in some cases assure us concerning his mind and will, (whereby he can bestow honour and credit to any instrument employed by him, to any revelation proceeding from him,) it cannot but (notwithstanding that cross instance) reasonably be supposed, that God however doth reserve the power thereof in some eminent and discernible manner peculiar to himself, for the promoting his own service. That also at least God being the author and establisher of nature, and the continual sustainer of it by his free providence, it is not likely that he will suffer the laws and course thereof to be much violated, except upon occasions very considerable, and for very good purposes; no inferior cause being able to determine his voluntary influence or providential concourse to the accomplishment of designs contrary to his will and purpose. That also the natural goodness and justice of God, the constant care and providence he exercises over this world, the particular relations he beareth toward mankind, (as the Maker and Father, the Lord and Governor thereof,) the honour and interest of truth, of religion, of

[a] Πῶς ὖν ὁ σχίτλιος ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων τὸν μὲν Θεὸν, τοὺς δὲ γοήτας ἡγεῖσθαι; *Cels. apud Orig.* lib. ii. p. 89.

[b] Siquidem edicens multos venturos, et signa facturos, temerariam plane signorum, et virtutum fidem ostendit, ut apud pseudo-christianos facillimarum. *Tert. in Marc.* iii. 2.

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use (whose protector and patron he is, and declareth himself,) the necessary regard he also, in connexion with rest, doth bear to his own honour and glory, do all conspire to persuade, that God will never endure such things to be performed in any high manner, so that good and well meaning people shall be very liable to be thereby extremely seduced into error; or that himself shall be intolerably mocked by the enemies of his glory and our good. This may serve to render it probable, that the objection is capable of a solution.

But to answer more distinctly and particularly; we do grant, that God sometimes for special reasons (for wise probation of some persons and just punishment of others; for to approve some men's sincerity and constancy, to detect other men's naughtiness and vanity) may permit such things (in some manner, in some degree such) to be effected by the influence of wicked spirits, or the fraud of wicked men; yet then it will never be very hard for moderately wise and welldisposed persons to distinguish such feats from those acts which issue from the positive and direct efficacy of God, for authorizing his messengers and confirming his truth: we may usually discern them to come from bad causes by their nature; we may certainly detect them by their design and influence.

1 Cor. xi. 19. 2 Thess. ii. 9, 11. Deut. xiii. 1, &c. Matt. xxiv. 24. Rev. xiii. 13.

There are some things so great, that it is not reasonable to conceive, that any such inferior power is able to do them; or if they were able, that God should permit their power actually to be exerted, and to succeed in doing them: such is the making any general or grand alteration in the course of nature; which being God's great work and establishment, the which he doth, as the prophets speak, govern by a standing law, and preserve according to a perpetual decree, which cannot pass; yea according to a covenant, which his faithfulness is in a manner engaged to observe; it is not probable that he will suffer any creature to disturb or disorder: this experience well confirmeth; for had bad spirits a power of crossing nature so, such is their malice and proneness to do mischief, that the world would soon have been turned by them into

Jer. v. 22. xxxiii. 25. Ps. cxlviii. 26.

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confusion and ruin; that all things therein go in so kindly and steady a course, is an argument of their small power and influence upon things; that God holdeth the reins fast in his own hands, reserving to himself only as Lord paramount of nature a power to dispense with any of its main laws; that it is *he alone, who*, as the Psalmist saith, *doeth great wonders*. There are also some things, which although not of so great and general consequence, are yet of so difficult performance, that it is improbable any creature should effect them; such was the turning of dust into lice, which the devils could not enable the Egyptian sorcerers to perform; to prepare or dispose so much dust for the reception of souls, and to furnish so many souls for the dust, did, it seems, exceed their ability; whence they were forced to confess of that miracle done by Moses, *This is the finger of God*.

Ps. cxxxvi. 4. lxxii. 18. lxxxvi. 10. Deut. iii. 24. Exod. viii. 19.

There are also things so good, and so beneficial to mankind, that evil spirits may be deemed unable to do them, (God, the fountain of good, retaining them as instruments of his glory, and arguments of his goodness, to his own dispensation,) which also we may presume they would not be willing, were they able, to perform, it being against their disposition or their interest to do it; such are, to dispossess devils, (that is, to divide and weaken their own kingdom;) to discover moral truths of consequence, (that is, to drive men from themselves;) and even to free men from grievous diseases, (that is, to starve their own ἐπιχαιρεκακία, and malignity;) as is implied in that passage of the Gospel, where it is said, *These are not the words of him that hath a devil: Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?* Extraordinary works then, if they are very great, very hard, very good, do thence indicate their cause to be divine: wicked spirits deal only in petty, low, and useless prestigiatory tricks, of small consequence, and no benefit.

John x. 21.

But there are farther some things infallibly signifying a divine virtue, peculiar to God, and (either by their nature or from the decree of God) incommunicable to any creature, otherwise than as acted by God, or immediately depending on him: such are, the knowledge of future

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contingent events declared by predicting, or presignifying them, according to that of the Prophet; *Shew*, said he, in way of challenge and conviction to the objects of heathen worship, *the things to come, that we may know ye are gods:* such is the discerning men's secret thoughts and intentions, the which God assumeth as proper to himself; *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins;* so that καρδιογνώστης is a characteristical attribute, or title, proper to him. Such is the restitution of men from a state of death to life; a work not only in itself most difficult, in respect to the ordinary rule of nature, which it transgresseth, but impossible to any mere creature, without God's aid; for that the souls of men when they die return into God's hand, and enter into a state determined by his high sentence; whence no creature can fetch them down, or raise them up; most impossible also because God by especial decree hath reserved the power of doing it appropriate to himself; the power of life and death being his prerogative, who saith, *I am he, and there is no God *beside me; I kill, and I make alive:* of whom again it is said, *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.* He it is that in his hand doth *hold the keys of hell and of death.* The performing things also by mere word and will, without application of other force, or any preparation of the subject matter, (being equivalent to the work of creation,) is peculiar unto God, the author of all being, or to such as act by the immediate help of his infinite power.

Isa. xli. 23.
Jer. xvii. 10. xi. 20. xx. 12.
1 Chron. xxviii. 9.
1 Sam. xvi. 7.
Psal. vii. 9.
Acts i. 24. xv. 8.
Deut. xxxii. 39.
*Πλὴν ἐμοῦ.
1 Sam. ii. 6.
Rev. i. 18.

We may add, that there also seem to be some things, which infernal spirits (who continue under restraint and command, within a great awe and dread of their Judge,) dare not so much as pretend to or counterfeit; knowing that as presently they shall be checked in their attempt, so they shall be grievously chastised for their presumptions; such may be the assuming to themselves the special names of God, the directly withstanding the extraordinary messengers of God, and the like.

Matt. viii. 29.
Mark i. 24.
Luke viii. 28.

So even considering the very nature of strange works may enable us to distinguish them; but the end and de-

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sign of such works, together with the influences an
fects of them, will farther ascertain us of their orig
if they are done to abet any gross error, or to pro
any mischievous purpose; if they manifestly do sedu
apostasy from God or goodness; if they naturally te
the production of impiety, iniquity, or impurity; if
do necessarily produce any great disorder or disturban
the world, assuredly hell is the source of them; the
rive from him whose kingdom and interest they adva
by their fruits we may know the tree from which
grow. If also they discover ostentation and vanity i
actors, or serve only to gratify idle humour and curi
in the spectators of them, tending otherwise to no
purpose; it is easy to collect whence they spring;
they come from the father both of mischiefs and van
who not only delights to abuse us with villanies, b
amuse us also with trifles and fond superstitions.

As, saith Origen, *the power of those enchantment Egypt was not, in itself, like to that admirable powe God's grace vouchsafed to Moses; so the end did com those Egyptian feats to be jugglings, those of Moses divine* [c]. The portentous things done *by the energy of tan* are, as St. Paul calleth them, τέρατα ψεύδους, e false prodigies, or prodigies abetting falsehood and nity.

2 Thess. ii. 9.

But the works of the most wise and good God, as are commonly works of wonderful majesty and gran incomparable and inimitable for difficulty; so they al are holy, always useful; they ever aim at good ends, produce wholesome fruits: hence we may discern t and hence we are obliged to acknowledge them; afford us ground to say with the Psalmist; *Unto th Lord, we do give thanks; for that thy name is nea wondrous works declare.* Such works, as they can be effects of God's power, so they are arguments o truth; for that he cannot lend his hand, for that he

Ps. lxxv. 1.

[c] Ὡς γὰρ οὐχ ἡμεῖς δύναμις ἡ τῶν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐπωδῶν τῇ ἐν τῷ Μωυσῇ σ χάριτι, ἀλλὰ τὸ τέλος διέλεγχε τὰ μὲν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ὄντα μαγγανείας. (*Cels.* 2.

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not prostitute his assistance to the maintenance of any thing, which is not perfectly true and good; he will *not so tempt any man* into error. *If I by the finger of God cast out devils, then indeed is the kingdom of God come unto you*, (that is, if I perform works by the divine power, then assuredly is my doctrine true,) was an irrefragable argument.

James i. 13. Luke xi. 20.

We may also observe, that those wicked spirits are themselves apprehensive how easily their feats are distinguished from the works of God; for hence, it seems, they chose to utter them clandularly, in obscure corners, in blind times, among barbarous and silly people; judging that persons of any wisdom or goodness will be soon able to detect them, and ready to explode them: a little light dazzles *the powers of darkness*, and scares away these spectres; a little goodness mates their force, enfeebleth and disheartenetb them.

We may also add, that the Messias's works by a peculiar character should be manifestly distinguishable from such as proceeded from infernal powers; for that it should be his business to impugn, defeat, and overthrow the Devil's kingdom; all the falsehoods and superstitions, all the immoralities and impieties, which it consisted in, or which supported it: to this end all his doctrine, practice, and performances would conspiringly tend, that *Satan like lightning should be thrown down from heaven;* which most evidently would evince, that what he should do should only come from heaven.

Luke x. 18.

Having thus shewed reasons why, and signified to what purposes, the Messias was to receive special testimonies from God; let us now survey those, which were indeed by him exhibited to Jesus our Lord. There is indeed no kind or degree of attestation needful or proper, which hath not been largely from heaven afforded to him. God (so our Lord argueth) is in his own nature invisible and indiscernible to any sense of ours; neither could we endure the lustre of his immediate presence. (*No man ever saw God, or can see him; there shall no man see him and live.*) It must be therefore by mediation of signs and

John v. 36, 37. 1 Tim. vi. 16. Exod. xxxiii. 20.

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works supernatural; the causing of which can only be imputed to him, as beyond the power of any creature to effect or counterfeit; that he can assuredly signify his mind unto us; such only in approbation of any person, law, or doctrine, can be expected from him; and such, in divers kinds, and in great measures, God hath, we say, *furnished for the authorizing Jesus.*

1. God did attest to him long before his coming into the world, by presignifying and predicting concerning him, at several times, in several ways, by several persons, (even by all the prophets and eminent persons among his people of old,) many things, even all things considerable about him; in exact congruity to the circumstances of his coming into the world, (the time when, the place where, the family whence, the manner how, the condition in which he was born,) to the qualities of his person, to the doctrine and law which he published, to all his undertakings and performances and sufferings, and to the successes consequent upon what he did. (This is a matter of very large consideration; which otherwhile we have insisted largely upon, and therefore shall now wave enlargement on it.)

2. God did in attestation to him immediately send before his face, as his herald and harbinger, a Prophet, or one for his admirable wisdom and sanctity of life somewhat *more than a prophet;* who indeed without doing any miracle, by the prodigious integrity and strictness of his life, by the wonderful efficacy of his doctrine and discourse, procured unto himself a reputation equalling or exceeding that of any former prophet; (whom even Josephus, an indifferent historian, reporteth a man of singular goodness and great authority,) to predispose the minds of men to receive him; by converting men to a serious reflection upon their lives and amendment of their manners, to *prepare his way;* as also to point him out, to foretell of him as presently coming, to testify of him as being come. This was he, to whom it well agreed, and who plainly did assume to himself that which was written by Malachi; *Behold, I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare*

Matt. xi. 10. John x. 41.

Mal. iii. 1. Matt. xi. 10.

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thy way before thee; of whom Isaiah (John himself being the avoucher and interpreter) said, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight;* who was, as Malachi did again signify, *to come in the spirit and power of Elias, to convert the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* This most extraordinary and excellent person did at several times and occasions attest unto Jesus, not only that he was incomparably, for the dignity of his person and worth of his performances, to be preferred before himself, and consequently before all other prophets, but that he was the *very Christ*, the *Lamb of God*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the world: they sent to John*, saith the text, *and he bare witness of the truth.* God by him also foretold divers things concerning our Lord, which did really come to pass; as those words, uttered occasionally by many persons, do imply; *John indeed did no miracle; but all things which John spake of this man were true.*

Isa. xl. 3. John i. 23. Mal. iv. 6. Luke i. 17. John i. 15, 26, 29, 34. Matt. iii. 11. Luke iii. 16. John v. 33. John x. 41.

3. God attested unto our Lord by visible apparitions from heaven, at several times, in fit seasons, made in the sight and presence of very good witnesses: angels appearing warned his good father and blessed mother concerning the time and manner of his coming into the world; angels again appearing uttered tidings of his birth, joined with acclamations of praise to God, and gratulations of joy to men; angels were vigilant for his safety, ministered unto him in his temptations and needs, assisted and comforted him in the agonies of his passion, waited upon him at his resurrection; an extraordinary star (like that of the morning before the sun) officiously did usher him into the world; at his baptism the *Holy Ghost* (in the symbolical figure of a dove) appeared *descending, and resting upon him*, in the presence of St. John the Baptist, (that most just and holy person, so taken and acknowledged by all men, even by his enemies and murderers; and a most competent witness, as who dared with utmost peril before the greatest persons to assert the truth;) *He testified thereof,*

Matt. i. 20, 24. Luke i. 26. Luke ii. 9, &c. Matt. ii. 13. Matt. iv. 11. Luke xxii. 43. Matt. iii. 17. Luke iii. 22. John i. 31.

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and said, I saw the Spirit of God descending from heaven as a dove, and resting upon him. Moses and Elias also (those most eminent instruments of God, and illustrious representatives of the Messias) did from heaven in a most glorious and splendid manner attend upon him, in the presence of three most credible witnesses, Peter, James, and John, the Apostles; one of whom doth himself thus, with the due confidence of an eye-witness, report the fact; *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were spectators of his majesty—being with him in the holy mountain.*

Matt. xvii. 5. Luke ix. 28, 31. 2 Pet. i.

4. God also by vocal attestation did expresaly at several times own and approve Jesus: at his baptism, in the audience of St. John the Baptist and others present there; when, *Behold there was a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:* the like heavenly voice was heard at the transfiguration; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear him:* so the Gospels report it; and thus St. Peter himself, a more immediate witness and attendant there; *He received from God the Father honour and glory, a voice being brought unto him from the magnificent glory; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard, being with him in the holy mount.* Again, a little before his death, in presence of a multitude, upon Jesus's prayer, that God would by him glorify his name, an audible return was made from heaven; *There came,* saith the text, *a voice from heaven,* saying, *I have both glorified it, and will again glorify it.*

Matt. iii. 17. Luke iii. 22. Matt. xvii. 5. Luke ix. 35. Mark ix. 7. 2 Pet. i. 17. John xii. 28.

5. God attested to our Lord in that he was endued with a power constantly resident in him of performing miraculous works, for nature and quality such, as could only proceed from a most divine power; not only thwarting the course of nature, but transcending the strength of any creature, and especially contrary to what any evil creature could or would perform: this was a testimony beyond any human testimony, and which our Lord insisted upon as such; *I,* saith he, *have a greater testimony*

John v. 36. x. 25, 38. xiv. 11.

than that of John; for the works which the Father hath granted me, that I should perform them, those very works which I do, they testify about me, that the Father hath sent me.

Works indeed he performed of a stupendous greatness and difficulty; all the creatures (the most unruly and boisterous, the most malignant and rebellious) beside their natures, and against their wills, did obey his commands: in a tempest *he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there became a great calm: so that men did marvel, saying, What manner of man is this, for even the winds and the sea obey him!* the sea stood firm for him and St. Peter to walk upon; he turned water into good wine; he unconceivably so improved a few loaves and little fishes as to feed and satisfy multitudes, leaving more behind than there were at first; he cured the most incurable diseases, inveterate palsies, fluxes of blood, and leprosies; he restored senses, and limbs wanting from the birth, or for a long time; innumerable persons, blind, deaf, dumb, lame, and maimed, he restored to the use of their faculties, and members respectively, without any medicinal applications, or any natural means conducible to those purposes: he restored lunatic persons to their right wits, and dispossessed evil spirits, they not daring to disobey him, and acknowledging his uncontrollable authority; *They were,* saith the text, *amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.* These were indeed works of excessive grandeur and difficulty; but he did others far more great and hard; and these were greater for the manner of performing them, than in their own nature: he did other acts so great, that they were only to be done by an infinite power; and most of these he performed in a manner which argued omnipotency present with the doer.

Matt. viii. 26. Luke viii. 24, 25. Matt. xiv. 26. John vi. 19. ii. 9. iv. 52. ix. 1. Matt. viii. 6. ix. 2, 20, 32. viii. 3. xii. 12. xv. 30. xx. 34. Mark ix. 5. Matt. xvii. 5. Mark i. 27.

Works proper unto God he did many; such was discerning the thoughts, reasonings, opinions, and purposes of men, however concealed or disguised, whereof we have many instances; and his intimate acquaintance, St. John,

Matt. ix. 4. xii. 25. xxii. 18. Luke xi. 17. vi. 8.

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teſtifies of him generally, ſaying, *He needed not that any ſhould witneſs about a man, for he knew himſelf what was in man.* Such was alſo to forgive ſins, (a privilege only belonging to the ſupreme Lord and Lawgiver, againſt whom ſin is committed;) the which he aſſumed to himſelf, and irreproveably maintained it by exerting a power equivalent thereto; *For whether*, ſaid he, *is it eaſier to ſay, Thy ſins be forgiven thee; or to ſay, Ariſe and walk? but that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive ſins, (then ſaith he to the ſick of the palſy,) Ariſe, take up thy bed, and go to thine houſe: and he aroſe, and departed to his houſe:* ſuch it was likewiſe to foretell future contingencies; this he often did; as concerning his own paſſion and reſurrection, with all the circumſtances of them; particularly the treaſon of Judas; (*He knew*, ſaith St. John, *from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and who it was that ſhould betray him:*) concerning St. Peter's lapſe, repentance, and ſuffering; concerning the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and utter demoliſhment of the temple; concerning the perſecutions which his diſciples ſhould undergo; concerning the communication of the Holy Ghoſt after his deceaſe, and the propagation of the Goſpel in the world: ſuch was the foundation of the Church upon a rock, againſt which *the gates of hell ſhould not prevail:* ſuch again it was to raiſe the dead, which he often performed; he raiſed the ruler's daughter, and the widow's ſon of Naim, and his friend Lazarus; and, *The dead are raiſed*, is reckoned among the ordinary miracles done by him, in the anſwer to St. John the Baptiſt's diſciples: theſe were acts of divine power, which no creature, unaſſiſted by God, could perform.

John ii. 25. Matt. ix. 5. Matt. xvii. 12. xvi 21. xx. 17. xxiv. 2, 9. x. 17. xxviii. 20. Luke xxiv. 27, 29. John vi. 64. Chryſ. tom. vi. Or 61 p. 634, 638. Matt. ix. 25. Luke vii. 12. John xi. 1, &c. Luke vii. 22.

And conſidering the manner of performance ſuch were both theſe and moſt of the reſt; they in that reſpect emulating God's inimitable work of creation, and in a manner ſeeming to exceed it; for that it ſeemeth harder to produce things out of matter indiſpoſed and repugnant, than to bring them out of mere nothing: as God by mere word and will created things, when *he ſpake, and it was done; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt;* ſo did Jeſus

Pſ. xxxiii. 9.

n like manner, by the efficacy of his command, or by ſections equipollent thereto, without prediſpoſing the ſubjacent matter, or uſing any natural inſtrument, accompliſh his great and ſtrange works: *He rebuked the wind, and ſaid to the ſea, eace, be ſtill;* ſo he quelled the ſtorm: *I will, be thou cleanſed;* ſo he cured the leper: *Young man, I ſay unto thee, Ariſe;* ſo he revived the widow's ſon: *O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee as thou deſireſt;* ſo he cured the Canaanitiſh woman's poſſeſſed daughter: *He cried out, Lazarus, come forth;* καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ὁ τεθνηκὼς, ſo the *dead man* heard his voice, and preſently *came forth* out of the grave: he ſaid, *Ephphatha, Be opened,* to the deaf man's ears; they immediately heard, and obeyed: he ſaid but one word, Ἀνάβλεψον, *See again,* to the blind man; καὶ παραχρῆμα ἀνέβλεψε, *and without more ado he ſaw again:* he did but *chide the* great *fever,* with which St. Peter's mother-in-law was troubled, *and it left her:* he did but take the ruler's daughter by the hand, and *the girl revived, and roſe up:* he only touched the two blind men's eyes, and ſo *their ſight was reſtored:* the woman, who had a flux of blood for twelve years, did but touch him, καὶ ἰάθη παραχρῆμα, *and ſhe* thereupon *ipſo facto inſtantly was healed:* yea multitudes of ſick perſons together did only endeavour to *touch the hem of his garment, and as many as touched it were healed; there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.* When he uſed any thing like means, he, as St. Chryſoſtom obſerveth, proceeded in ways not only preternatural, but contrary to nature; as when he cured the blind man in St. John's Goſpel, anointing his eyes with clay and ſpittle: διὰ πράγματος ἐπιτείνοντος τὴν πήρωσιν, ἀνεῖλε· *by a thing apt to increaſe* (or ſtrengthen) *blindneſs, he took it away.* So great in nature, ſo high for manner of performance, were the works of our Lord; they plainly were either the works, or they were done in the way of omnipotency.

Mark iv. 39. Luke v. 19. Luke vii. 14. Matt. xv. 28. John xi. 43. Mark vii. 34. Luke iv. 39. Matt. ix. 25. Matt. ix. 29. Luke viii. 43, 47. Matt. ix. 22. Matt. xiv. 26. Luke vi. 19. Chryſ. in 1 Cor. i. 22. John ix. 6.

They had alſo no leſs of goodneſs than of greatneſs divine; they were all of them plainly works of piety, or works of charity and pity; of a holy nature and beneficial uſe; they were generally performed upon evidently

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reasonable occasions, or needs; for the succour and comfort of persons in some want or distress; or for instruction of the minds and reformation of the manners of men; for healing the sick, feeding the hungry, easing the afflicted, restoring men to their senses, freeing them from the Devil's tyranny; for helping men in disappointment and need, or for encouraging kindness and good neighbourhood among people, (to which purpose his first miracle done at Cana served;) for instilling or impressing some wholesome truth, as when the fig-tree withered at his command; for encouraging dutiful submission to governors, as when the fish was brought up with a piece of money in his mouth, furnishing him and St. Peter to pay tribute: in fine, the nature and importance of his works St. Peter thus well expressed, saying of him; Ὃς διῆλθεν εὐεργετῶν, *Who went about doing good,* (or benefiting men,) *and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil; for God was with him:* and the Evangelist thus; *Jesus went about all the cities, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.*

John ii. 8. Matt. xxi. 19. Matt. xvii. 27. Acts x. 38. Matt. ix. 35. iv. 23. xv. 30.

Considering which things, we may well discern by what power and to what purpose Jesus did perform his admirable works; and may repel from our hearts all the cavils or calumnies forged by malicious and vain wits (such as those of Celsus and Julian) in derogation to them; we may particularly perceive how impudently false that suggestion was of the apostate emperor; who said that Jesus, *while he lived, did nothing worthy hearing, except one suppose to heal cripples and blind folk, and to exorcise demoniacs in the villages Bethsaida and Bethany, to be great works*[d]: in opposition to which kind of suggestions, and for abundant confirmation of our purpose, we may consider some advantageous circumstances and concomitances of our Lord's performances.

They were, we may observe, not some few things done

[d] Ἐργασάμενος παρ' ὃν ἔζη χρόνον οὐδὲν ἀκοῆς ἄξιον, εἰ μὴ τις οἴεται τοὺς κωλοὺς, καὶ κωφοὺς ἰᾶσθαι, καὶ τοὺς δαιμονῶντας ἐξορκίζειν ἐν Βηθσαιδᾷ, καὶ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ τῶν κώμαις τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων εἶναι. *Cyr. adv. Jul.* lib. 6.

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t one time, or in one place, among friends and partisans; but innumerably many and frequent, (a world of things, more than well could be recited, as St. John telleth us,) John xxi. done through a long course of time, (for some years together,) in several places, before all sorts of people, many of them very ill-affected towards him. They *were not done* Acts xxvi. 26. clancularly *in a* blind *corner*, among rude and simple people; but openly and visibly every where about Judea, the most lightsome place for knowledge and goodness in the world; where the best worship of God most flourished, and all diabolical impostures were most detested, in the places there most public and conspicuous; so he could affirm and admonish them; *I spake freely to the world; I* John xviii. 20. *always taught in the synagogues, and in the temple, where the Jews from all places resort; and in secret have I done nothing:* they were done so apparently, that the people generally saw them, and acknowledged them; that scarce any man could be ignorant of them; that the most learned and considerate men took it for granted, that they were done; that adversaries could not deny the performance of them, although out of envy and ill-will they were ready to impute it to the worst causes devisable; that many of all sorts were convinced, and divers converted by them: as for the people, *Great multitudes*, saith St. Matthew, Matt. xv. 30, 31. one present, and a follower of our Lord, *came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus's feet; and he healed them: insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see; and they glorified the God of Israel:* and, *The people marvelled,* Matt. ix. 33, 34. *saying, It was never so seen in Israel; but the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils by the prince of the devils:* the matter of fact they could not offer, against conviction of sense, to question; but malice prompted perversely and foolishly to assign a bad cause thereof: the matter was so notorious, that St. Peter could thus confidently appeal to the whole nation; *Ye men of Israel, hear these words;* Acts ii. 22. *Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved* (or demonstrated) *unto* ἀποδεδειγμένος.

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you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you; as you yourselves know. The adversaries (such whom superstitious prejudices, obstinate humours, or corrupt affections, envy, pride, ambition, avarice, or the like, had made adversaries to him) did not only see the thing, but were affrighted with its consequence; *The chief priests,* it is said, *and the Pharisees gathered a counsel together, and said; What shall we do, for this man doeth many wonders? if we let him alone, all men will believe on him:* yes indeed, notwithstanding all this watchful caution and fine policy of theirs, notwithstanding all the opposition and discouragement they could interpose, all their strugglings to smother his credit and doctrine, many were in their hearts convinced, even divers of such as were unwilling to believe, and ashamed or afraid to avow their persuasion; *Also,* it is said again, *of the rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:* Nicodemus, an honest and ingenuous person, a man of honour, (but somewhat wary and timorous,) came secretly, and in the name (it seemeth) of many persons alike disposed with himself thus spake: *Rabbi, we know that thou hast come a teacher from God; for no man can do those things which thou doest, except God be with him.* As for the generality of the people, (the most unconcerned in such cases as to point of honour and interest, and thence the most impartial and sincere party,) they following their senses were greatly affected and astonished with what he did; taking him for a very extraordinary person; some in a gross and confused manner, others in a more distinct way of belief; *Some said he was John the Baptist; others, that he was Elias; others, Jeremiah, or one of the ancient prophets risen up again: but many of the people* (more fully and exactly) *believed on him, saying, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than this man hath done?*

John xi. 47.

John xii. 42.

John iii. 2.

Mark xvi. 14. Luke ix. 19. John vii. 31. ii. 23.

We may also observe, that Jesus did not affect to perform wonders out of vanity, or to humour men's curiosity, but always upon inducements of piety and charity: most

of them were performed occasionally at the desire of men, suggested by their needs; and all of them for their edification or comfort; that he therefore did not seek by them to acquire reputation, or applause to himself; nor by them designed to advance any private interest of his own, but singly aimed at the promotion of God's glory in them all: that in effect no secular advantage of dignity or wealth or pleasure did from them accrue to himself; but rather disgrace and obloquy, hatred and enmity, trouble and pain, did from them befall him; all the glory of them purely coming to God, and all the benefit to men. As he charged his disciples, so he practised himself, doing all *gratis*, and freely, without expecting or accepting any requital. He often studiously concealed his miracles, forbidding those who were concerned in them, or conscious of them, to publish them; so striving to decline or to stifle the honour, naturally emergent from them. When it was necessary or expedient they should appear, he disclaimed being the principal author of them, referring and ascribing them to God: *I can*, said he, *do nothing of myself*: and, *The word that I speak to you I speak not of myself; but the Father who abides in me, he doeth the works*: and, *I seek not mine own glory; I receive not glory of men*: thus he professed, and so he practised: consequently the effect was, that (as it is expressed in the Gospels) *fear*, or a pious reverence, *did seize all men; and they glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet is risen up among us*; and, *That God hath visited his people: All the people seeing it gave praise to God: All men were amazed at the mighty power* (or majesty) *of God: When the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men*. And doth not so much glory from his performances resulting to God, so good an influence upon the hearts of men, evidently shew whence the power effecting them was derived? would the Devil be such an instrument of God's praise?

Matt. x. 18.

Matt. viii. 4. xii. 16. ix. 30. Mark v. 43. vii. 36. viii. 26.

John v. 41. viii. 49, 50, 54, 24. v. 30. xiv. 10.

Luke vii. 16. ix. 43. xviii. 43. Matt. ix. 8. xv. 30. Ἐπὶ τῇ μεγαλειότητι.

We may also with St. Irenæus observe, that Jesus, in performing his cures and other miraculous works, did never use any profane, silly, phantastic ceremonies; any mutter-

Iren. ii. 58.

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ing of barbarous names or insignificant phrases; any invocation of spirits, or inferior powers; any preparatory purgations, any mysterious circumstances of proceeding, apt to amuse people; any such unaccountable methods or instruments, as magicians, enchanters, diviners, circulatorious jugglers, and such emissaries of the Devil, or self-seeking impostors, are wont to use; but did proceed altogether in a most innocent, simple, and grave manner, with a majestic authority and clear sincerity, becoming such an agent of God as he professed himself to be.

That also the whole tenor of his proceedings was directly levelled against the kingdom of darkness; against all the impiety, all the malice, all the filthiness, and all the fallacy thereof; at the casting wicked and impure spirits, not only from the bodies, but out of the souls of men; causing men not only to detest and defy them, but to loathe their qualities, and to eschew their works: this is that binding, disarming, rifling, and dispossessing *the strong one*, which Jesus alleged as an infallible argument, that he was not only no friend, but a mighty enemy to the infernal powers; an enemy, not only in disposition and design quite contrary, but in virtue and force highly superior to them: that we should worship God alone with most hearty reverence and love; that we should bear the same clear good-will to all men as we do to ourselves; that we should be strictly just, veracious, and sincere in our words and dealings, meek and humble in our spirits, pure and sober in all our enjoyments, (things perfectly opposite to the temper and interests of hell,) were things, which as our Lord constantly in his doctrine did inculcate, so he countenanced and furthered them by his works; from whence assuredly we may collect, that they came from heaven, and were intended for the promoting God's service: hell would never contribute so much to its own disgrace and disadvantage, would never so industriously concur to defeat and destroy itself; God plainly reaped the benefit by Jesus's works, he therefore certainly did plant them and bless them.

Luke xi. 21. Matt. xii. 29.

Tertull. Apol. 23.

Upon these considerations it appeareth sufficiently, that

in correspondence to the reason and exigency of the case, our Lord did perform innumerable works, which had impressed on them the truest and highest characters of divinity; the most peculiar grandeur, and perfectest goodness; the purest holiness of design, and the beneficial tendency proper to the works issuing from divine power; so that supposing God should send the Messias into the world, or any great ambassador from himself, he could scarce possibly, he should not at least, all things considered, need to furnish him with more convincing attestations, than he hath exhibited to our Lord. Whence we may well apprehend the validity of that argument, which our Lord himself suggested for assurance of St. John the Baptist in his opinion concerning him, or rather for the satisfaction of St. John's disciples; when John sent two of his disciples, with this inquiry, *Art thou he, or look we for another?* Jesus thus replied; *Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached; and blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.*

Matt. xi. 5. Luke vii. 22.

6. God most signally did attest to our Lord by miraculously raising him from the dead; or in that by a divine power he raised up himself from the grave; which work, for the singular greatness and high consequence thereof, together with the certain evidence that it was really performed, might alone suffice to confirm the verity of all our Lord's pretences; [that he was the true *Messias*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the world*, the *Lord of all things*, the *Judge of all the world*;] most efficaciously to evince and persuade the most eminent and important parts of his doctrine, (the immortality of our souls, the resurrection of our bodies, the just and wise providence of God over men, the dispensation of rewards and punishments hereafter, answerable to men's conversation and practice in this life.) This indeed is the point, which invincibly guardeth and fortifieth all other testimonies; but it is so pregnant of considerations belonging to it, that it deserveth more time and room than we now can yield it; wherefore we choose

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rather at present to pass it over, than slightly to touch it, reserving it for a peculiar subject of discourse.

7. A farther attestation was given to our Lord by the power of doing miracles in his name imparted to the disciples; who by him were appointed and authorized to prosecute the great design commenced by himself: not only his person, but even his name did great wonders; it cured diseases, it cast out devils, it surmounted nature, and subdued hell: whereby he indeed appears, for especial favour with God, personal excellency, dignity of office, importance of undertaking, incomparably to have surpassed all former prophets and commissioners of God, by whose ministry any law, covenant, or doctrine, hath been conveyed to men; never by delegation or in dependence upon any other person, never in any other person's name, were such works done. To the twelve Apostles at their first mission he among other instructions enjoined thus; *Cure the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils; ye have freely received, freely give:* to the seventy disciples, sent out by himself to instil the rudiments of his doctrine, and to admonish people of his approach, he gave this commission and charge; *In any city into which you enter, heal those which are sick therein; and say unto them, The kingdom of heaven is come near unto you:* he then adds; *Behold, I give you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy:* the success was, that *they returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.* At his departure he promised and foretold thus; *These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall* * *take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover:* all which things were abundantly fulfilled; for a liberal communication of divine power was granted to them, enabling them to perform the greatest works; so that, as St. Luke telleth us, *by the hands of the Apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people;* the performance of which was so notorious, that upon knowledge, and in

Omnis hæc nostra in illos dominatio et potestas de Christi nominatione valet, &c. *Tert. Apol.* 23.

Acts iii. 16.

Matt. x. 8.

Luke x. 8, 9, 19.

Luke x. 17.

Mark xvi. 17.

* Ἀρῶσι.

Acts ii. 4, 43. v. 12.

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confidence thereof, *there came*, saith the holy historian, *a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one.* * The like power also was by the Apostles derived unto others, in such kind and measure, as the carrying on Jesus's great design (the propagation of God's truth and the edification of his Church) did require; by succession it was transmitted through several ages, and visibly continued so long, as such extraordinary means were useful or expedient for the conviction and conversion of the world; most of the first Fathers of the Church do expressly testify concerning remainders thereof in their times: *It is not possible* (saith St. Irenæus for one instance, among others innumerable) *to tell the number of the graces* (or special gifts) *which the Church through the whole world receiving from God doth, in the name of Jesus Christ, crucified under Pontius Pilate, daily perform for the succour of the nations,* &c. And remarkable is the confidence of Tertullian, reporting the effects of this power in his time: he in his apologetic speech for the Christians even dares to provoke the Ethnic governors to trial, and to lay the issue concerning not only the truth of Christian doctrine, but the lives and safety of its professors thereon; *Let*, saith he, *any person, manifestly possessed with the Devil, or one who is deemed to be rapt with a divine fury, be set before your tribunals; that spirit, being commanded by a Christian to speak, shall as truly there confess himself to be a devil, as elsewhere a god — If he do not so confess, not daring to lie, even there spill the blood of that procacious Christian: What*, adds he, *is more manifest than that work? what more faithful than that probation? Stand not to these sayings, if your eyes and ears will suffer you.* The like assertions and challenges might be produced out of divers other Fathers.

Luke vi. 17, 18. Acts viii. 17. * Heb. ii. 4. Rom. xv. 18.

Iren. ii. 40.

Tert. Apol. 28.

Neither perhaps is the communication of this divine virtue so ceased now, that it would be wanting upon any needful occasion; the frequent performance of such works among them in whom faith by abundance of other com-

Τῶν δυνάμεων τῶν ἐν μέσῳ δὲ ἰσχυόντων ἐκλελοίπασι. Chrys. de

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petent means may be produced and confirmed, unto whom also the first miracles are virtually present by the help of history and good reason, is indeed nowise necessary, nor perhaps would be convenient; but did the same pious zeal for God's honour, and the same charitable earnestness for men's good, excite any persons now to attempt the conversion of infidels to the sincere Christian truth, I see no reason to doubt, but that such persons would be enabled to perform whatever miraculous works should conduce to that purpose; for *the Lord's hand is not shortened*, the grace of Christ is not straitened, the name of Jesus hath not lost its virtue.

Sacerd. 4. in Joh. Or. 24. in Psal. 142 Aug. de Bapt. iii. 16. Retract. i. 13.

Isa. lix. i. 1. 2.

The Spirit of God doth attest to him.

8. God did attest to our Lord by accomplishing his prediction and promise, in a plentiful * effusion of the divine Spirit upon his Church and disciples, for their perfect instruction and guidance, for their support and comfort, for enabling them to convince and convert men to him; *When* (said our Lord to them before his decease, concerning this attestation) *the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from my Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:* and, *Tarry ye* (said he again, after his resurrection) *in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

John xv. 26. Acts v. 32. 1 John v. 7, 8. 1 Cor. xii. * Acts x. 45. John xv. 26. 1 John v. 7, 8. Luke xxiv. 49. Acts i. 4. ii. 33.

Accordingly soon after our Lord's ascension, as the Holy Spirit was conspicuously dispensed, upon various occasions, in divers proportions, and in different ways, according to the exigencies of things, for the edification and enlargement of the Church; so especially at Pentecost it was in a most solemn manner and abundant measure poured forth upon the whole Church and each member of it; *For then*, saith St. Luke, *the disciples (to the number of one hundred and twenty persons) being gathered together—with one accord, in one place;—suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind*, (which was a most proper emblem of the Holy Spirit's nature and powerful efficacy,) *and it filled all the house where they were sitting*, (which then typified the Catholic Church, through which the Holy Spirit was to be diffused, to animate and actuate it;) *and there appeared unto*

Acts iv. 31. viii. 17. x. 44. xi. 15. xiii. 52. xix. 6. 1 Cor. xii—

Acts i. 15.

Acts ii. 1—

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them cloven tongues like as of fire, (denoting the various gifts and graces imparted for expression of God's praise and propagation of his truth, which were to be enlivened by fervent charity, zeal, and devotion,) *and it sat upon each of them;* implying that every faithful Christian constantly should partake of this heavenly benefit, according to his need; *and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance:* that is, they were perfectly inspired, so that each was endowed with the gift of speaking a language before unknown to him; which was a miracle very great, and most pertinent; to learn a strange tongue requiring much time and great pains; the speaking such tongues being then very serviceable to the promulgation of the Gospel: all which event was very public and notorious; for that at that festival-time *there were,* saith the divine historian, *dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised about, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language—the wonderful things of God.*

Μεμείμεται διὰ τὸ χαριζόμενον διάφορον. Naz. Orat. 44.

This was therefore a general attestation to our Lord, pregnant and clear as could be, both for conviction of unbelievers and confirmation of the faithful; the which effects it had; so that in virtue thereof, St. Peter having explained the design of it, *three thousand souls were added to the Church;* and all *did continue stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship.*

Acts ii. 41, 42.

Besides also it was an illustrious pledge of that inestimable gift, to be perpetually communicated to the Church for its edification, and to each Christian for his direction and assistance in religious practice, according to the evangelical covenant; the which is a standing witness, attesting to our Lord, in the heart and conscience of every good man, according to that of St. Peter; *And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him:* he indeed keeping his residence and exerting his power in all pious souls; shining into their minds with *the true heavenly*

Acts v. 32.

Eph. i. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 6.

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light, (that *pure and perfect wisdom, which is from above;*) kindling charity, devotion, comfort, and joy in their hearts; supporting them in trials and temptations; raising their affections and desires above this present transitory world; disposing them to relish spiritual things, and to entertain themselves with the hopes of future blessedness; doth assure them, that *Jesus is the Lord;* doth *seal* to them the truth of his doctrine, the reality of his promises, the efficacy of his grace, the wonderful greatness of his love and goodness toward them; so that hence that is abundantly verified which St. John telleth us, *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.*

1 Cor. xii. 3. Rom. viii. 16. Gal. iv. 6. 2 Cor. i. 22. iv. 2. v. 5. Eph. i. 13. iv. 30. 1 John v. 10.

There are divers other considerable attestations to our Lord; such as the divine sublimity of his doctrine, discovering itself to enlightened minds to shine from heaven; the testimony of God's Spirit to the hearts and consciences of good and faithful people, assuring them that *Jesus is the Lord*, and sealing to them the truth of his doctrine; the operation of God's grace in production of moral virtues, or the purgation of heart and amendment of life flowing from faith in him, the efficacy of prayers in his name offered to God; all the joys, and comforts, and happy fruits springing from Christian devotion; the good effects the Gospel hath had in reformation of the world inducing many great benefits, and preventing mischiefs therein: but these and the like, being not so public, so distinctly observable, so easily drawn into argument, apt to convince the incredulous, I shall pass over; adding but one more of a more general and conspicuous nature.

Rom. viii. 16. Gal. iv. 6. 2 Cor. i. 22. v. 5. iv. 2. Eph. i. 13. iv. 30. 1 Cor. xii. 3. 1 John v. 10. Ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔχει τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ.

9. Lastly, God hath attested unto our Lord by the wonderful success which hath attended his Gospel in its conveyance and propagation: its, in so short a time, so generally prevailing in the hearts of men, triumphing over the mightiest oppositions, subduing the world to the faith and obedience of itself, accomplished by means to appearance so insufficient, and by ways so improbable, may seem to reason no less a miracle of Providence against the course of human affairs, than the rest performed by him, or for him, were miracles to sense, above the power of

natural causes, both arguing the presence and assistance of omnipotency: the work was *a victory over the world* and over hell, achieved *by the faith of Jesus;* and that a very strange one, whether we consider the combatants who fought for him, or the adversaries against whom, or the weapons by which, or the manner how they strove, or the very cause itself, which they maintained for him.

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They were *not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, but* a very few, mean and poor, unlearned and simple men, whom no outward circumstances commended to human regard, no worldly advantage furthered in pursuance of their design, who had nothing visible to rely on, to hearten, to support them in their endeavours: a few fishermen, publicans, tent-makers, and other persons of like quality, education, improvement, and capacity, were the instruments of this great work; those brave soldiers of Christ, who boldly set themselves in array against all his adversaries: and what adversaries were they? who, but all the majesty and authority, all the force and violence, all the policy and craft, all the wit, learning, wisdom, and eloquence, all the passion and rage of men, all the power, cunning, and malice of the cursed spirits; in short, all the forces and endeavours of earth and hell combined against them [e]. They were to check and control the ambitions, interests, pleasures of mighty emperors and potentates; whose assumed divine honours they decried as vain and wicked; whose commands they reprehended as unjust and impious; to whose power and pleasure they prescribed restraints, declaring them obliged to contain their practice within bounds of piety, equity, and temperance: they were to suppress the credit and the gain of all priests or ministers of religion in the world, whose doctrines they condemned as vain and silly, whose

2 Cor. i. 26. Ἀγράμματοι, καὶ ἰδιῶται. Acts iv. 13.

[e] Clemens Alexandrinus well says, that no philosophy would have endured such a test, or endured such a shock of persecution.

Καὶ τὴν μὲν φιλοσοφίαν τὴν ἑλληνικὴν ἰὰν ὁ τυχὼν ἄρχων κωλύσῃ, εἴκεται παραχρῆμα, τὴν δὲ ἡμετέραν, &c. *Strom.* vi. (p. 502.)

Καίτοι γε μυρίων ὅσων κωλυμάτων γινομένων πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἱστορῆσαι τὴν Ἰησοῦ βασιλείαν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ. *Orig. cont. Cels.* vii. (p. 349.)

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practices they reproved as vile and damnable: they were to confute all the subtilty of philosophers, all the eloquence of orators, all depths of learning, and improvements of reason or wit; impugning the opinions famous and current among men as false, or slighting them as frivolous: they were to overbear and master the prejudices of all people, fortified by natural inclination and temper, by countenance of long tradition and custom; by education, by public laws, and all so mighty enforcements: they were to charge with reproach all ages past, and the ancestors of all people in the world, (those of one small people only in part excepted,) of very gross ignorance and error, of sottish folly, of heinous wickedness and impiety: they were to sustain all the slanders, reproaches, and persecutions which the resolute opposing so many interests, humours, and opinions inevitably would produce: they were beside vigorously to assault Satan and all his complices; to beat down his worship, and overturn his domination; to baffle all his craft and might, to stop his mouth, to bind his hands, to tread upon his neck.

All these great exploits they were to achieve in a most quiet and peaceable manner, in a way most plain and simple, without any terror or tumult, any sleight or artifice, any plausibility of language, or subtilty of reasoning; without applying either any rude violence or sly allurement: they were indeed little more than barely to report a story, and to affirm it true of their own knowledge, adjoining in connection with that story some plain honest rules of life here in this world, and denouncing some consequences on the belief of their story and the practice of their rules in another world hereafter. These things it
1 Cor. iv. 5. was their business to tell simply, and to aver confidently,
2 Cor. iv. 7. xii. 9. charging men at their utmost peril to believe them; boldly condemning whatever thing and what person soever should oppose their report or doctrine: they were not to assay the persuading this or dissuading from the
1 Cor. ii. 4. contrary by fine strains of speech, or with acute *enthymemes;* but to propose it without care or circumstance, in such a homely dress and naked plainness of speech, that

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ven children and idiots might easily comprehend the main of their sense and drift: all the strength, the ornament, the charm of their discourse consisted in the clear sincerity shining through it; joined with a constant adherence to their doctrine, an earnest diligence in promoting it, an admirable patience in joyfully suffering all contumelies and adversities incident to them for its sake; accompanied also with a blameless innocence and integrity of life, a sweet calmness of mind and meekness of behaviour, together with a kind and charitable disposition toward all men: these were all the human or natural *weapons of their warfare;* with which alone, God's help concurring, they did (to use St. Paul's words) *pull down strong holds, and cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ:* in this strange manner did they maintain their cause:

2 Cor. x. 4.

A cause indeed, which of itself did not seem likely to prosper in the world, having in itself so little of plausibility, and affording to the embracers thereof so very small encouragement: which enjoined to its followers the worship and imitation of a Person lying under extreme disadvantages in the eye of man; who had lived in a very mean condition, and had suffered a most ignominious death; whom therefore to be obliged to adore and obey could not but to the ordinary sense of men appear very offensive: which again recommended a doctrine little grateful, or rather very cross, to the natural propensions, to the current principles, to the secular advantages of men; which indulged men in nothing that they were apt to like, but greatly curbed and checked them in the use of their liberties, gratification of their fancies, and enjoyment of their pleasures; which much disparaged all the pleasing goods, and all the flattering glories of the world; charging men never much to affect or seek them, sometimes utterly to quit and renounce them; freely choosing in their stead to undertake a cross with all its pains and disgraces, which propounded it as an essential ingredient

Vide Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61. p. 633.

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of itself, or a condition necessary for all that should avow it, to *circumcise the heart*, to *mortify the deeds of the body*, to *crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; to cut off right hands*, and *pull out right eyes;* to part with all their fortunes, to hate their relations, to sacrifice their lives, if they were thereto called, for its sake; which rendered men, as it were, dead to all present fruitions, and unconcerned in all hopes here; engaging them entirely to place their contents and happiness in a reversion of things invisible and future: they, in fine, did hold forth a doctrine to the sense of flesh and blood full of most rigid laws, severe rules, harsh conditions, and *hard sayings*, apt to choke the faith of men, and to obstruct its entertainment with them.

Rom. viii. 13. Gal. v. 24.

[f] Now that a handful of such persons, against such obstacles, in ways so preposterous, and different from the course of human proceedings, were able to render so unlikely a cause so absolutely victorious; so that suddenly all the might, wit, and eloquence of men did stoop unto it, and serve under it; that the majesty of the greatest princes gladly veiled thereto, that the prudence of statesmen cordially did approve it, that all the learning of the world yielded itself up captive and tributary thereto, that all superstition vanished before it, and all the force of hell sunk under it; is it not a huge argument, that God himself did in favour thereof interpose his omnipotent arm; that to the Lord of hosts (*unto whom*, as King Asa said, *it is nothing to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power;* to whom it is indifferent *to save by many or by few*) this glorious victory is to be ascribed, who thereby pleased to accomplish his ancient promises, to maintain his holy truth, to further the salvation of his creatures, to promote his own glory, and especially to magnify the name of his only beloved Son Jesus, our ever

2 Chron. xiv. 11. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. Rom. xv. 8.

[f] Τὸ ῥῆμα ἐκεῖνο, τὸ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, τοῦτο πάντα εἰργάσατο, τοῦτο γὰρ οἱ τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγοι, ἔργων δημιουργοὶ, ἔργων θαυμάτων καὶ παραδόξων, &c. *Chrys.* tom. vi. *Orat.* 61. p. 636.

Πῶς ἂν τοσούτων πράγμα μετὰ τοσούτων κωλυμάτων καὶ πίρας ἴσχυν ἔτυ λαμπρὸν, καὶ ἔκβασιν μαρτυροῦσαν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, εἰ μὴ θεία τις καὶ ἄμαχος δυνάμις ἦν τοῦ ταῦτα εἰπόντος, καὶ τελέσαντος, &c. *Ibid.* p. 637.

blessed Lord? to *whom for ever and ever be all praise.* Amen. SERM. XX.

Having thus largely endeavoured to shew that Jesus our Lord is the Messias, and consequently supposing the truth of the Christian doctrine; let us now briefly recapitulate and explain in what manner and in what respects the New Testament represents him as *Christ*; how, according to that, Jesus was signally chosen and consecrated by God, in a manner supereminent, to all the offices denoted by the title Christ, (the office *prophetical*, *regal*, and *sacerdotal*,) and how he effectually doth execute them.

Him, saith St. Peter in general, God anointed with the Holy Spirit and power: God anointed him, not with an external affusion of material oil, (as neither were the Patriarchs, nor King Cyrus, who are yet called *the Christs of God*;) that was only a ritual and symbolical business; but with a real infusion of divine grace and power, qualifying and enabling him perfectly to execute all those great and extraordinary functions. With this gladsome oil he was thoroughly anointed and replenished above measure: with this he was *sanctified from the womb*; when the *power of the Highest did overshadow him* at his conception: with this at his baptism he was solemnly and visibly inaugurated; when *the heavens were opened* unto him, and *the Spirit of God descended upon him as a dove, and came upon him*: with this in all the course of his life and ministry he was continually accompanied; the virtue of it being discovered and diffused in most sensible effects of wise and gracious discourse, holy and blameless conversation, wonderful and glorious performances, for the honour of God and the benefit of mankind, to the delight and consolation of all well-disposed minds: *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth*, saith St. Peter in the Acts, *with the Holy Ghost; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with him.* He was by this spiritual unction constituted in right and in effect a *Prophet*, a *King*, a *Priest*.

Acts x. 38. Ps. xlv. 7. Luke iv. 1. John iii. 34. Luke ii. 35. Matt. iii. 16. Acts x. 38. John vi.

1. First, a *Prophet*: for they were not mistaken, who, upon his raising the widow's child, were *amazed, and*

Luke vii. 16.

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glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet was raised up among them, and that *God had visited his people.* Nor they (in St. John's Gospel) who, reflecting upon another great miracle, (feeding multitudes with five loaves and two little pickled fishes), brake into this confession; *This is in truth that Prophet who was to come into the world.*

John vi. 14.

And the disciples well described him, who styled him, *A Prophet mighty in word and deed, before God and all the people.* He was so, as having an extraordinary commission from God, declared by vocal attestation of God himself from heaven, by express testimony of St. John the Baptist, (*the person of most remarkable sanctity and greatest authority in his time,*) by the performance of innumerable and incomparable signs and works miraculous; (*arguments in the highest degree and to the utmost possibility sufficient to assert and confirm it.*) He was also in greatest perfection qualified for the exercise of that function, by inspiration complete and unlimited; by disposition of mind altogether pure and holy; (expressed in a continual practice of life void of all sin and guile; by an insuperable courage and constancy, a transcendent wisdom and discretion, an incomparable meekness and patience, a most winning sweetness and goodness, a most powerful awfulness and majesty, shining in all his discourse and demeanour.)

Luke xxiv. 19.
Εἷς ὑμῶν καθηγητὴς, ὁ Χριστός.
Matt. xxiii. 8.
1 Pet. ii. 22.
2 Cor. v. 21.
1 John iii. 5.

Suitable also to the authority of his commission and the qualifications of his person, were the weight and the extent of the doctrine he in God's name revealed; it concerning no less than the salvation of mankind, and reconciliation of the world to God; the entire will of God, and whole duty of man; with all the laws and precepts, the covenants and conditions, the promisings and threatenings, relating to our future state. He did not (as other prophets have done) prophesy about the constitution of one particular law, religion, or covenant; about the reproof or reformation of one state, the judgment or fate determined to one nation; but his design reached to the instruction and conversion of all people, in all places, through all times, to the settling of a law and covenant absolutely universal and perpetual: mysteries he brought forth never before reveal-

, and decrees never to be reversed; to the final doom of the world did his prophetical denunciations extend. So he a *Prophet*. Such he was in his temporal appearance and administrations upon earth; and such he continues for ever in heaven; from thence upon all occasions by his Holy Spirit imparting to his faithful people all needful instruction in truth, direction in practice, admonition to duty, and comfort in trouble. He is also such by the ministry of his servants, whom he hath appointed, and whom he assists, to instruct and guide us.

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2. He is also a *King*, by many unquestionable titles, of great and extensive authority, exercising it to the best effects and purposes. He is a King by *nature* and *birth*; as *the only Son of God*, partaker of his eternal power and majesty; for therefore to him it was said, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre:* and as *the Son of David;* for of him the angel said, *The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his Father, and he shall reign over the house of David for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* He is also a King by *divine designation* and appointment. For, *Let all the house of Israel,* saith St. Peter, *know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ;* and, *The Father hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man* (or as such.) He is also King by *merit* and *purchase;* for, *he for the suffering of death was crowned with glory and honour; he was obedient to death, even the death of the cross; therefore God super-exalted him, and bestowed on him a name above every name.* To *this end he both died and rose again, that he might lord it over both the dead and living.* He is King also by *conquest;* having delivered us out of *the power of darkness,* and freed us from the vassalage of sin; *having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly,* and triumphed over them; having *delivered us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; that we being delivered from our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.* He is also a King by our *election* and free choice,

Heb. i. 8. Isa. ix. 6.
Luke i. 32.
Acts ii. 36.
John v. 22, 27.
Heb. i. 2. ii. 9.
Phil. ii. 8. ὑπερύψωσε χαρίσατο.
Rom. xiv. 9. ἵνα κυριεύσῃ.
Col. i. 13. ii. 15.
Luke i. 71, 74.
Tit. ii. 14.
Rom. vi. 22.
John viii. 36.
Matt. xi. 29.

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we having voluntarily put ourselves under his protection, and submitted to his command, and taken upon ourselves his yoke, and vowed everlasting fealty to him in our baptism. Such a right he hath of governing.

As for the *extent* of his *kingdom*, it is in all respects boundless, both for place and time; it is universal and perpetual. He is the eternal King of all the world: God hath *so exalted him and given him a name above all names, that to the name of Jesus every knee should bend, whether of things in heaven, or things upon earth, or things under the earth. To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb*, by every creature *in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth*, are jointly to be ascribed *the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the power, for ever and for ever*. He is constituted ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς, *above all rule, and authority, and domination, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come*: it is his just title and proper badge, *The King of kings, and Lord of lords*; to whom all nations are vassals, yea all creatures are subject and tributary. But he in especial manner is King over his Church; that *peculiar people*, whom he hath especially purchased to himself by his merits and blood; whom he hath subdued to his obedience by the sword of his word, and by the prevailing virtue of his Spirit; that mystical Zion, in which it is said that God *will place his reign and residence for ever*; that *heavenly city*, whereof all the saints are *fellow-citizens*, and he the sovereign Head and Governor; *God hath*, saith St. Paul, *put all things under his feet, and hath given him head above all things to the Church*. In respect to which both the evangelical dispensation here, and the future state of bliss hereafter, are called the *kingdom of heaven*. Over this he reigns, enjoying all royal prerogatives, exercising all royal administrations, and dispensing most royal munificences. He hath in this his kingdom established most righteous and wholesome laws; the which his subjects are by him obliged and enabled to obey. He constantly defendeth and protecteth his subjects from all invasions and assaults of their enemies, (in-

Phil. ii. 8.
Rev. v. 12. xix. 16. i. 5. xvii. 12.
Eph. i. 21. Col. ii. 10. 1 Tim. vi. 15. Mat. xxviii. 18. xi. 27. John iii. 35. xiii. 3. xvii. 2.
Eph. i. 22. Acts xx. 28.
Ps. cxxxii. 13. Rev. iii. 12. xxi. 2. Heb. xii. 22. Gal. iv. 26. Eph. ii. 19. i. 22.

testine enemies, their own lusts; external enemies, the Devil and the world.) He provides for all their needs and wants; he supports them in all their distresses and troubles. He exercises judgment over them; distributing fit rewards and punishments with exquisite justice and equity; (most liberal rewards to the loyal and obedient; most severe punishments upon obstinate offenders and rebels.) He lastly restrains and suppresses, defeats and destroys, all the adversaries to his royal dignity, and to the welfare of his good subjects, both visible and invisible, temporal and spiritual. *Out of his mouth* (as it is in the Apocalypse) *there goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. These mine enemies,* (he shall one day say,) *which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me. He must reign,* saith St. Paul, *till he hath put all enemies under his feet.* Thus is he a King, endued with sovereign right and power, crowned with glorious majesty, enjoying all preeminences, and exercising all acts suitable to regal dignity.

Col. ii. 15. Rev. xix. 15. Psal. ii. 9. Matt. xxv. 31. Luke xix. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 25.

3. He is likewise a *Priest*, and that much above an ordinary one; διαφορωτέρας τέτευχε λειτουργίας, *He hath obtained a more excellent function* (as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) than ever any other priest had. *Every high priest,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, *is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices.* He did, as such, once offer up an oblation, in worth and excellency far surpassing all the sacrifices and oblations that ever were made; (all the fattest hecatombs that ever were sacrificed, all the gold and precious stones that ever were dedicated, all the spices and perfumes that ever were kindled into incense, upon altar, were but vile and sordid, were ineffectual and unacceptable, in comparison thereto;) a willing oblation he made upon the altar of his cross of himself, (his most innocent, most pure, most spotless and unblemished self,) of his most glorious body, (the temple of the Divinity,) of his most precious blood, of his dear life, *for the life of the world* and redemption of mankind; for the *propitiation of our sins and the sins of the whole world;* an oblation

Heb. viii. 6. Ἀρχιερεὺς τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἡμῶν. Heb. iii. 1. viii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 18. Heb. ix. 9. Heb. vii. 26, 27. x. 10, 5. ix. 12. Eph. v. 2. John x. 16. vi. 51. 1 John ii. 2.

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which alone could appease God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, and merit his favour toward us.

1 John ii. 1. 1 Tim. ii. 5. John xiv. 13. xv. 16. xvi. 23, 24. Eph. v. 20. Heb. v. 7.

He doth also (which is another sacerdotal performance) *intercede for us;* he intercedes as an advocate for the pardon of our sins; (*If any man sin, we have an advocate with* (or to) *the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*) He intercedes for the acceptance of our services, (whence we are enjoined to *do all things, to pray, to give thanks in his name;*) for the *granting our requests; for grace and assist-*

Eph. i. 3, 6.

ance; for *comfort* and *reward;* for all *spiritual blessings* and advantages to be conferred upon us; he thus pursuing the work of salvation by his propitiatory sacrifice begun for us; whence, as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith,

Heb. vii. 25.

he is able to save to the uttermost those that by him come to God, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

1 Chron. xxiii. 13. Lev. ix. 22, 23. Numb. vi. 23. Gen. xiv. 19, 20.

He doth also perform the priestly function of *blessing.* Blessing the people in God's name, and blessing God in the people's behalf; as did that illustrious type of his, Melchizedek; (*Blessed,* said he, *be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.*) So hath Jesus effectually pronounced all joy and happiness to his faithful people; he pronounced

Matt. v. 1, &c. Luke xxiv. 50. Eph. i. 3.

blessedness to them in his sermons; he blessed his disciples at his parting; *Lifting up his hands, he blessed them,* saith St. Luke; *God in him,* saith St. Paul, *hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places,* (or *in heavenly*

Acts iii. 26.

things;) and, *God,* saith St. Peter, *having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless us in turning every one of us from his iniquity:* and at the last day he will utter that com-

Matt. xxv. 34.

fortable benediction; *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* So is Jesus a true and perfect *Priest.* And,

So, finally, in all respects, is *Jesus God's anointed,* and *the Christ of God;* as the great *Prophet* and Doctor; as the *Sovereign King* and *Prince;* as the *High Priest* and *Advocate* of his Church. And indeed that he is so is the fundamental point of our religion; which the Apostles did peculiarly testify, preach, and persuade; the sincere

belief of which doth constitute and denominate us *Christians.*

IV. The consideration whereof ought to beget in us a practice answerable to the relations between him and us, grounded thereupon.

If Jesus be such a *Prophet*, we must, with careful attention, and a docile mind, hearken to his admonitions and instructions; we must yield a steady belief to all his doctrine, and we must adhere constantly thereto, and we must readily obey and practise what he teaches. Heb. ii. 1, &c. Διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ ἡμᾶς περισσοτέρως προσέχειν τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσι, μήποτε παραρρυῶμεν, &c.

If he be a *King*, we must maintain our due allegiance to him, pay him honour and reverence, submit to his laws and commandments, repose trust and confidence in him, fly to his protection and assistance in all our difficulties and needs.

If he be a *Priest*, we must with sincere faith and hope apply ourselves unto him for, and rely upon, his spiritual ministries in our behalf; sue for and expect propitiation of our sins by virtue of his sacrifice; the collation of all spiritual gifts from his intercession; all comfort, joy, and felicity in consequence of his effectual benediction. *Having* (so the Apostle to the Hebrews admonisheth us) *a great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.* Heb. x. 21, 22.

In short, if *Jesus* be *Christ*, let us be *Christians;* Christians, not only in name, in outward profession, in speculation and opinion, but in very deed and reality, in our heart and affection, in all our conversation and practice. *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ* (that is, who confesseth Jesus to be Christ, and himself to be his follower) *depart from iniquity.* 2 Tim. ii. 19.

Now the God of peace, that brought from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

His only Son, &c.

SERMON XXI.

JOHN i. 14.

And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.

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THAT *Jesus Christ our Lord* is the μονογενὴς, *the only Son of God*, that is, the Son of God in a peculiar and high manner, otherwise far than any creature can be so termed, St. John doth here (and in several other places) suppose, or assert plainly; and it is a great point of the Christian doctrine, a special object of our faith. To shew the truth of which, to explain how it is to be understood, and to apply the consideration thereof to our practice, shall be the subject and scope of our present discourse.

John i. 18. iii. 16, 18. 1 John iv. 9.

I. That the Messias, designed by God to come into the world for the restoring and reconciling mankind unto God, was in an especial manner to be the Son of God, even the ancient prophets did foretel and prefignify; *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, saith God of him in the second Psalm. And of him, that which in the first less perfect sense was spoken to King Solomon, (who as the son and heir of David, as the builder of God's house, as a prince of peace, reigning in great glory, wealth, and prosperity; as endued with incomparable wisdom, did most signally represent and prefigure him,) was chiefly intended for him, and did more exactly agree to him; *He shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will esta-*

Ps. ii. 7. Heb. i. 5. Acts xiii. 33.

1 Chron. xxii. 10. xxviii. 6. 2 Sam. vii. 13.

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bliſh the throne of his kingdom over Iſrael for ever: and again; *He ſhall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my ſalvation: Alſo I will make him my firſtborn, higher than the kings of the earth.* And accordingly it was, even before our Saviour's appearance, a perſuaſion commonly paſſing among the Jews, (both learned and unlearned,) that the Meſſias ſhould be the Son of God; as may be collected from ſeveral paſſages in the New Teſtament; in which being *the Chriſt* and being the *Son of God* are conjoined as inſeparable adjuncts, whereof one did imply the other, according to the ſenſe then current, and previous to the embracing our Lord's doctrine. For Nathanael, we ſee, was no ſooner perſuaded that Jeſus was the Chriſt, but he (according to his anticipation, common to the people) confeſſeth thus; *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; Rabbi, thou art the King of Iſrael.* Martha in like manner being moved to declare her faith concerning Jeſus, expreſſeth it thus; *Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Chriſt, the Son of God, which ſhould come into the world:* and likewiſe doth St. Peter, in the name of all his brethren, the Apoſtles; *We have believed, and have known, that thou art the Chriſt, the Son of the living God.* St. John the Baptiſt alſo doth thus expreſs his belief and yield his teſtimony concerning Jeſus; *And I ſaid, and bare record, that this is the Son of God.* Yea even the high prieſt himſelf implied the ſame, when examining our Lord he ſaid, *Art thou the Chriſt, the Son of the Bleſſed? I adjure thee by the living God, tell us, whether thou be the Chriſt, the Son of God:* ſuppoſing that to be the *Chriſt* and to be the *Son of God* would concur in the ſame perſon. Yea, the devils themſelves had learned this, who cried out, *What have we to do with thee, Jeſus, thou Son of God?*

Pſ. lxxxix. 26, 27. Heb. i. 5.

John i. 49.

John xi. 27.

John vi. 69. Matt. xvi. 16.

John i. 34.

Mark xiv. 61. Matt. xxvi. 63.

Matt. viii. 29. Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 41, 34.

Thus did the ancient Scriptures intimate, and thus were God's people generally perſuaded about the Meſſias; and that he is indeed the Son of God, the evangelical Scripture doth every where teach us, calling him not only at large *the Son of God*, but more emphatically the ἀγαπητὸς, (*the darling Son of God;*) the υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης, *Son*

Matt. iii. 17. xii. 18. xvii. 5.

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of God's love; the υἱὸς ἀληθινὸς, *God's true Son,* (that is, such most properly, in a most excellent manner incomparably representing and resembling God;) the ἴδιος υἱὸς, (*God's proper,* or peculiar *Son;*) the πρωτοτόκος, *God's firstborn;* God's υἱὸς μονογενὴς, *his only begotten Son:* all which epithets import somewhat of peculiar eminency in the kind and ground of this his relation unto God. The relation itself in a large sense, and equivocally, is attributed to several: Adam is called *the son of God;* and the angels are usually entitled such; and princes are styled *the children of the Most High;* and *all men* are said to be *God's offspring,* and *good men* are especially dignified with that appellation; *God's people,* as such, (the Israelites of old, and Christians now,) are *the children of God;* yea, God is the *Father of all things,* as the maker and preserver of them: but all these, in comparison to Christ, are such in a manner very inferior, and in a very improper sense; for he is the *only Son of God:* which denotes a relation in its kind singular and incomparable; from which all other things are excluded.

Eph. i. 6. Col. i. 13. Rom. viii. 32. John v. 18. 1 John v. 20. Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 6. Luke iii. ult. Ps. lxxxii. 6. Acts xvii. 29. Matt. v. 45.

κατὰ τινα σχέσιν ἀφηλοτέραν. *Naz. Orat.* 37.

Now that we may discern the difference, let us consider the grounds and respects upon which this relation of our Saviour to God is built, or the reasons why he is called the Son of God: there are several expressed or implied in Scripture.

1. Christ is called the *Son of God* in regard to his *temporal generation,* as being in a manner extraordinary conceived in the *Blessed Virgin by the Holy Ghost;* so the angel expressly telleth us: *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God:* so the Apostle also; *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman,* (or born of a woman, γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικὸς—γεννώμενον in some copies:) a generation so peculiar and wonderful, without intervention of any father but God himself, is one ground of this relation and title; he therein excelling the common sort of men.

Luke i. 35. Τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον. Gal. iv. 4. Luke i. 32. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and God shall give him the throne of his father David.

2. Christ also may be termed the *Son of God* in regard

Dies iste quem tanquam extremum reformidas, æterni natalis est. *Sen. Epist.* 102.

SERM. XXI.

to his *resurrection* by divine efficacy; that being a kind of *generation*, or introduction into another state of life immortal. Others are upon this ground called the sons of God; *They*, saith our Saviour, *who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead—can die no more; for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God*, (υἱοί εἰσι τοῦ Θεοῦ,) *being sons of the resurrection*. How much more then may he be thence so named, who is *the first-fruits of them that sleep*, and *the firstborn from the dead?* especially since that of the Psalmist, *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*, was (according to St. Paul's exposition) verified in the raising him. In this respect Christ also did much excel all others, who upon the same ground are called the sons of God.

Luke xx. 35, 36.

1 Cor. xv. 20, 23. Col. i. 18. Rev. i. 5. Acts xxvi. 23. iii. 15. xiii. 32, 33.

3. Christ is capable of this title by reason of that *high office*, in which by God's especial designation he was instated. If ordinary princes and judges (as being deputed by God to represent himself in the dispensation of justice, or as resembling God in the exercise of their power and authority) have been called *the children of the Most High*, in the language of holy Scripture; with how much greater truth and reason may he be called so, who was most signally consecrated and commissionated to the most eminent function that ever was or could be; who did whatever he did in God's name, who represented and resembled God so exactly? It is his own argumentation and inference; *If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?* That extraordinary *sanctification* and *mission* did render him worthy and capable of that appellation, far beyond all others, who have for the like reason obtained it.

Ps. lxxxii. 6. xxix. 1.

John v. 35, 36.

4. Whereas also it is said, that God did appoint, or *constitute our Saviour heir of all things*; did *give him head above all things to the Church*, and did *put all things under his feet*; *did give him power over all flesh*; *did com-*

Heb. i. 2. Eph. i. 22. John xvii. 2. Matt. xxviii. 18. xi. 27.

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mit unto him all authority in heaven and earth; did *exalt him to the* highest place of dignity and authority next to himself, *at the right hand of the Majesty in the highest;* yea did place him upon his own throne and *tribunal* in his room, so that *the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son;* well may he in that respect be entitled the *Son of God;* as thereby holding the rank and privilege suitable to such a relation; he being the *Chief* of the family, and next in order to the great *Paterfamilias of heaven and earth. Of him,* saith St. Paul, *all the family in heaven and earth is named: Moses verily,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, *was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a Son over his own house:* and, *Being made so much better than the angels,* saith the same Apostle, *as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they,* (they being only called *servants,* or *ministers;* he being entitled a *Son* and *heir.*)

Phil. ii. 9. Heb. i. 3, &c. Acts ii. 33, 36. John v. 22. Eph. iii. 15. Heb. iii. 5, 6. Heb. i. 4, 5, 7.

In these respects is our Saviour properly, or may be fitly, denominated the *Son of God,* with some peculiarity and excellency beyond others: but his being with such emphasis called *God's only begotten Son,* (denoting an exclusion of all others from this relation upon the same kind of ground,) doth surely import a more excellent ground thereof, than any of these mentioned. For the *first Adam* did also immediately receive his being from the power and inspiration of God, (God formed his body and breathed a soul into it.) And Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist had also a generation extraordinary and miraculous, as being born of parents mortified by age and unapt for generation, by interposition of the divine power, (so it is expressly said of Sarah, δύναμιν ἔλαβεν εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος, *she received power from God for conception of seed;*) which productions do not so greatly differ from the production of Christ as man.

Ἀφ' ἑνὸς καὶ ταῦτα νενεκρωμένου.

Heb. xi. 11, 12.

And how can we conceive that the production of angels should be so much inferior to our Saviour's temporal generation, if there were no other but that?

And although our Saviour was the first and chief, yet was he not the only Son of the resurrection; *There were,*

Heb. ii. 10.

as the Apoſtle to the Hebrews ſaith, *many ſons* of this kind *brought to glory;* and Chriſt was *firſtborn among many brethren;* this is alſo a ground not proper or perſpicuous enough for ſuch a denomination; and indeed before it came to paſs, he was called God's Son; he was ſo when he lived, he was ſo when *God ſo loved the world, that he gave him for its ſalvation.*

Rom. viii. 29.

Neither doth the free collation of power and dignity, how eminent ſoever, well ſuffice to ground this ſingularity of relation; for we ſee others alſo in regard to their deſignment and deputation to offices of power and dignity, although indeed ſubordinate and inferior to thoſe he received, to be entitled the *ſons of God;* and however this is rather the foundation of a metaphorical, than of a natural and proper *ſonſhip,* which is too ſlender and inſufficient for him, who in the moſt ſolemn and auguſt ſtrain is denominated ſuch.

John iii. 16, 18.

Likewiſe although our Saviour be the heir of all things, yet hath he co-heirs, whom *God hath,* as St. Paul ſpeaketh, *together enlivened, and together raiſed, and together ſeated with him in thrones of* glory and bliſs; beſide that privileges of this kind are rather *conſecutive* and *declarative* of this his relation to God, than formally *conſtitutive* thereof: *If a ſon, then an heir,* ſaith St. Paul; inheritance follows *ſonſhip,* and declares it, rather than properly makes it.

Rom. viii. 17, 29. Eph. ii. 5, 6. Heb. ii. 10.

Rom. viii. 17.

Moreover thoſe prerogatives of ſingular affection and favour appropriated to Chriſt, together with all thoſe glorious preferments conſequent on them, do alſo argue ſome higher ground of this relation: for how could it be, that merely upon account of that temporal generation, (which did only make him a man, *of like paſſions and infirmities to us, ſin only excepted,*) or in reſpect to any thing conſequent thereupon, God ſhould affect him with ſo ſpecial a dearneſs, and advance him to dignities ſo ſuperlative, ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς, καὶ ἐξουσίας, καὶ δυνάμεως, καὶ κυριότητος, *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named; angels and authorities and powers being,* as St. Peter ſays, *made ſubject*

Heb. iv. 15.

Eph. i. 21. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

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unto him? Such proceedings (that generation only, or any thing resulting from it, being supposed) do not seem consistent with that decent congruity and natural equity, which God is ever wont to observe in his regard to persons and in his ordering of things.

We must therefore search for a more excellent and more proper ground of this magnificent relation, or peculiar *sonship;* and such an one we shall find clearly deducible from testimonies of holy Scripture, (and by several steps of discourse we shall deduce it.)

1. It is thence first evident, that our Saviour had in him somewhat more than human, according to which he is said to have existed before his temporal generation here among men. Even as men after death are in regard to a superviving part of them, their immortal soul, said to be
Luke xx. 38. and live; for, even then, saith our Lord, *all men do live to God.* For, before his birth here, he is said to have been
John iii. 13. in heaven, and to have descended thence; *No man,* saith he, *hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven:* even when he visibly lived here, he was (as himself affirms) *secundum aliquid sui,* according to somewhat invisible in him, then actually in heaven; and according to that *somewhat* he was before in heaven; and by union of that invisible being to human visible nature, he is said to have descended from heaven. His ascension into heaven was but a translation of the human nature thither, where according to a more excellent nature he did abide before the incar-
John vi. 62. nation; for, *What,* saith he again, *if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?* from hence he is declared worthy and capable of so transcendent preferments;
John iii. 31. for, *He that cometh from above, out of heaven, is above all*
viii. 23. *things;* because, *The second man is the Lord from heaven.*
1 Cor. xv. 47. He, as to his manifestation in the flesh, was junior to St. John the Baptist, but in truth was of more ancient standing, and thence was to be preferred before him, as St.
John i. 15. John himself perceived and professed; *He that,* said St. John, *comes after me is preferred before me, because he was before me.* He did subsist even before Abraham was born,

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ence without abſurdity he could affirm, that he and raham had interviews and intercourſe together; ſo he courſed with the Jews; *Thou art not*, ſaid they, *yet ty years old, and haſt thou ſeen Abraham?* he replied; *rily, verily, I ſay unto you, Before Abraham was, I am:* is ſaying did ſeem very abſurd to them, and ſo offended em, that they took up ſtones to caſt at him; not apprending the myſtery couched in his words, and that he d another nature, different from that which appeared to em, according to which that ſaying of his was verified. ea farther he had a ſubſiſtence and a glory before the orld had a being; for thus he prays; *And now, Father, orify me with thine own ſelf with the glory which I had ith thee before the world was;* glory (that is, a moſt nourable ſtate of being, and excellent perfection) was t only deſtinated to him, but he really had it, and enyed it with God, before the world was.

John viii. 58.

John xvii. 5.

ἡ δόξα παρὰ σοῦ.

2. Neceſſary indeed it was, that he ſhould exiſt before e world, for that, ſecondly, God by him made the orld, and for that he made the world himſelf; *God*, ſaith . Paul, *created all things by Jeſus Chriſt;* and, *By him*, th the Apoſtle to the Hebrews, *God made the worlds;* r the ages, τοὺς αἰῶνας, that is, all things which ever at y time did ſubſiſt; thoſe very ages, which the ſame poſtle ſaith *we believe to have been framed by the word of* d.) *By him*, ſaith St. John in the beginning of his Goſl, *were all things made, and without him was nothing de that was made;* δι' αὐτοῦ, that is, *by him*, not δι' αὐτὸν, *him* only: to exclude that ungrammatical miſinterpreion, St. Paul joineth both thoſe notions together; τὰ ντα δι' αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται, *All things*, ſaith he, *were de by him, and for him:* as alſo to prevent any reſtricn or exception of matters created by him, he particuly reckoneth what things were made by him; *By him*, th St. Paul, *were all things created, that are in heaven d that are in earth; whether they be thrones, or dominns, or principalities, or powers, all things were created him, and for him:* he was not only (as ſome heterodox erpreters would expound it) to create a new moral and

Eph. iii. 9.

Heb. xi. 2.

John i. 3.

Col. i. 16.

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figurative world; he ſhould not only reſtore and refor[illegible] mankind, but he of old did truly and properly give be[illegible] to all things; and among thoſe things, he even creat[illegible] angels, *all things in heaven;* beings unto which that [illegible] taphorical creation of men here doth not extend or an[illegible] wiſe appertain: he therefore conſequently, as St. P[illegible] ſubjoins, ἐστὶ πρὸ πάντων, *doth exiſt before all things;* as [illegible] cauſe muſt neceſſarily in nature precede the effect.

3. He did indeed (to aſcend yet higher, even to the top) exiſt from all eternity: for he is called abſolutely ἀρχὴ, *the beginning,* which excludes all time previous to his exiſtence; he is ſtyled πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, *the firſtborn of every creature;* (or rather born before all the creation, as πρῶτός μου ἦν ſignifies, *he was before me,* in St. John.) He is *the Word,* which was *in the beginning;* that is, before any time conceivable, and conſequently from eternity. He is called *the eternal life; The life* (ſaith St. John in his firſt Epiſtle; the life, that is, another nature, frequently attributed to Chriſt, eſpecially by that Apoſtle; *the life) was manifeſted, and we did ſee it; and we bear witneſs, and ſhew that eternal life, which was with the Father,* (ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, *the Word was with God;* and ἡ ζωὴ ἦν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, *the life was with the Father,* are, as I conceive, the ſame thing:) and more explicitly in the ſame Epiſtle; *We are,* ſaith St. John, *in him that is true, in his Son Jeſus Chriſt; he is the true God, and the eternal life.* Hence is he frequently in the Apocalypſe ſtyled *the firſt and the laſt, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega; he that was, and is, and is to come;* which phraſes do commonly expreſs the eternity and immortality proper to God; as in that of Iſaiah; *Thus ſaith the Lord, the King of Iſrael, and his Redeemer the Lord of hoſts; I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and beſide me there is no God.* The ſame is ſignified by that elogy of the Apoſtle to the Hebrews; *Jeſus Chriſt, the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever,* (that is, who is eternally immutable;) that Apoſtle alſo implies the ſame, when he ſaith, that Melchizedek repreſented and reſembled the Son of God as having μήτε ἀρχὴν ἡμερῶν, μήτε ζωῆς τέλος, *neither begin-*

Col. i. 18.
Rev. iii. 14.
Col. i. 15.
John i. 30.
i. 1.
1 John i. 2.
John i. 4.
xi. 25. xiv. 6.
1 John i. 2.
v. 11, 12, 20.
1 John v. 20.
Rev. i. 11, 17. ii. 8, 21. vi. 22, 13.
Iſa. xliv. 6, xli. 4. xlviii. 12.
Heb. xiii. 8.
Heb. vii. 3.

ning of days nor end of life; Melchizedek in a typical or myſtical way, our Lord in a real and proper ſenſe was ſuch; beginningleſs and endleſs in his exiſtence. And the Prophet Micah ſeems to have taught the ſame, ſaying of him, (of him that ſhould come out of Bethlehem, to be ruler in Iſrael,) that *his goings forth have been from old, even from everlaſting;* (or, from the days of eternity.) His eternity is however neceſſarily deducible from that, which is by St. John, St. Paul, and the Apoſtle to the Hebrews ſo plainly affirmed of him, that he made the world, that he made the ages, that he made *all things;* for if he made the world, he was before the foundations of the world, which phraſe denotes eternity; if he made the ages, he muſt be before all ages; if all things were made by him, and nothing can make itſelf, then neceſſarily he was unmade; and being unmade, he neceſſarily muſt be eternal; for what at any time did not exiſt, can never without being made come to exiſt. His eternity alſo may be ſtrongly inferred from his being called the *word,* the *wiſdom,* and the *power* of God; for if he were not eternal, ἦν ἄρα καιρὸς, ὅτε χωρὶς τούτων ἦν ὁ Θεὸς, *there was a time when God wanted theſe;* when he was without mental ſpeech, or underſtanding; when he was not wiſe, when he was not powerful; as St. Athanaſius argues. It therefore doth with ſufficient evidence appear from Scripture, that our Saviour had a being before his temporal birth, and that before all creatures, yea even from eternity. Farthermore,

Mic. v. 2.

1 Cor. i. 24.

In decret. Conc. Nic. pag. 276.

4. From what hath been ſaid, it follows, that his being was abſolutely divine. If he was no creature, if author of all creatures, if eternally ſubſiſtent, then aſſuredly he is God; that ſtate, that action, that property are incommunicably peculiar unto God. Only God is ὁ ὤν, *being of himſelf* originally and independently; only God is *the creator of all things,* (*He that made all things is God,* ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrews;) *only God hath immortality,* (or eternity,) ſaith St. Paul; no epithet or attribute is more proper to God, than that, αἰώνιος Θεὸς, *God eternal.* Hence is our Lord ſaid by St. Paul, before he

Heb. iii. 4.

1 Tim. vi. 16.

Rom. xvi. 26.

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did assume the form of a servant, and became like unto men, to have *subsisted in the form of God, not deeming robbery* to be equal to God*, (or to have a subsistence of duration and perfection equal to God;) so that as he was after his incarnation truly man, partaker of human nature, affections, and properties; so before it he was truly God, partaking the divine essence and attributes. Thence it is often in the Scriptures absolutely and directly named God; God in the most proper and most high sense; *in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*, saith St. John in the beginning of his Gospel, (the place where he is most likely to speak with the least ambiguity or darkness;) the same Word which was in time *made flesh, and dwelt among us*, was before all time exist with God, and was God. *God*, saith St. Paul, *was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, assumed up into glory*: of which propositions it is evident that Christ is the subject, and by consequence he is there named God. God is also by St. Paul said to have *purchased the Church with his own blood*; who did that, but he that also was man, even *the man Christ Jesus?* St. Thomas upon his conviction of our Saviour's resurrection did express his faith upon him by crying out, *My Lord and my God*; which acknowledgment our Saviour accepted and approved as a proper testimony of that faith; (*He permits him to say it, or rather he accepts it, not hindering him*, saith St. Athanasius.) St. Paul calls the coming of our Lord at the resurrection, *the appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. To the Son (as the Apostle to the Hebrews interpreteth it) it was said in the Psalm, (Psal. xlv. 7.) *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. We are*, saith St. John, *in the true one, in his son Jesus Christ; this he* (ὅτος) *is the true God, and life eternal*; no false, no metaphorical, no temporary God, but the very true God, the supreme eternal God. *Out of whom*, (saith St. Paul, recounting the privileges of the Jewish nation,) *as concerning the flesh*, (or according to his humanity,) *Christ came*,

Phil. ii. 6, 7.

* Τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ.

John i. 1.

1 Tim. iii. 16.

Acts xx. 28.

John xx. 28.

Συγχωρεῖ λέγειν, καὶ μᾶλλον ἀποδέχεται, μὴ κωλύων αὐτόν. *Athan. Orat. 3. contra Ar.* p. 394.

Tit. ii. 13.

Heb. ii. 8.

1 John v. 20.

Rom. xi. 5.

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who is over all, God bleſſed for ever; ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς, *the God over all;* the ſovereign God and Lord of all things[a]; the Moſt High; *God bleſſed for ever;* the ὁ εὐλογητὸς, which is a characteriſtical title or ſpecial attribute of God in the ſtyle of the Scriptures, and according to the common uſe of the Jews. Yea even of old, Iſaiah foretold *of the child which ſhould be born, of the ſon which ſhould be given to us, that his name ſhould be called* (that is, according to the Hebrew manner of ſpeaking, that he ſhould really be, or however that he truly ſhould be called) *the Mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace.*

Mark xiv. 61. Rom. i. 25. 2 Cor. xi. 31. Iſa. ix. 6.

In theſe places more clearly and immediately, in many other places obliquely and according to fair conſequence, in many more probably, our Saviour is called God, God abſolutely without any interpretative reſtriction or diminution. And ſeeing the holy Scripture is ſo careful of yielding occaſion to conceive more Gods than one; ſeeing it is ſo ſtrict in exacting the belief, worſhip, and obedience of one only God, abſolutely ſuch; may we not well infer with St. Irenæus, *Now* (ſaith he, ſpeaking indeed concerning the God of the Old Teſtament, whom the Gnoſticks did not acknowledge to be the higheſt and beſt God, but in words applicable to the God of the New Teſtament, whom we adore; *Now*, ſaith he) *neither the Lord, nor the Holy Ghoſt, nor the Apoſtles would ever have called any one definitively, nor abſolutely God, unleſs he were truly God:* and, *Never*, ſaith he again, *did the Prophets or the Apoſtles name any other God, or call Lord, beſide the true and only God*[b].

Vid. 1 John iii. 16. Gal. i. 1, 12. Jude 4. Iſa. xxxv. 4.

That he is truly God, we might alſo from other appellations peculiar to God; from divineſt attributes and di-

[a] Utroſque Dei appellatione ſignificavit Spiritus et eum qui ungitur Filium, et eum qui ungit, id eſt Patrem. *Iren.* iii. 6.

Rev. v. 13. πᾶν κτίσμα, (where by the way ſeeing all creatures worſhip him, he is excluded from being a creature.)

[b] Neque igitur Dominus, neque Spiritus Sanctus, neque Apoſtoli eum, qui non eſſet Deus, definitive et abſolute Deum nominaſſent, niſi eſſet verus Deus. *Iren.* iii. 6.

Nunquam prophetæ, neque apoſtoli alium Deum nominaverunt, vel Dominum appellaverunt, præter verum, et ſolum Deum. *Idem*, lib. iii. cap. 8.

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vineſt operations aſcribed to him; from the worſhip [illegible] honour we are allowed and enjoined to yield him, fart[illegible] ſhew; but theſe things (in compliance with the time [illegible] your patience) I ſhall omit.

Other appellations alſo peculiar unto the ſupreme G[illegible] are aſſigned to him, as that moſt appropriate and inco[illegible] municable name *Jehovah;* (of which in the Prop[illegible] Iſaiah God himſelf ſays thus; *I am the Lord, and there* *none elſe:* and Moſes; *Jehovah our God is one Jehov[illegible]* even this is attributed to him; for, *This,* ſaith Jeremi[illegible] *is his name, whereby he ſhall be called; Jehovah our righ[illegible]* *eouſneſs:* and of St. John the Baptiſt it was by Mala[illegible] foretold, that he ſhould *prepare the way of Jehovah.* Th[illegible] name *Lord* (anſwering to Jehovah) is both abſolutely an[illegible] with moſt excellent adjuncts commonly given him; Th[illegible] *ſecond man,* ſaith St. Paul, *is the Lord from heaven;* Th[illegible] *Lord of all things* he is called by the ſame Apoſtle; an[illegible] *the one, or only Lord: To us,* ſaith he, *there is one Lord,* *by whom are all things:* and, the Lord of glory, or moſt glorious Lord; (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory:*) and, *The Lord of lords, and King of kings,* he is called in St. John's Revelation, (*They ſhall,* ſaith he, *war with the Lamb, and the Lamb ſhall overcome them, for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings:*) we are alſo by precept enjoined, and by exemplary practice authorized, to render unto our Saviour that honour and worſhip, which are proper and due to the only ſupreme God; for, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve,* is the great law of true religion: **It is only belonging to God,* as St. Athanaſius ſpeaks, *to be worſhipped; a creature muſt not worſhip a creature, but a ſervant his Lord, and a creature its God.* And, † *They who call a creature Lord, and worſhip him as a creature, how,* ſaith he, *do they differ from the heathen?* But of him it is ſaid, *Let all the angels of God worſhip him;* of him myriads of angels ſay, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive the power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing: yea all creatures in heaven and earth, and under the earth,* reſound the ſame

Iſa. xlv. 6, 18.
Deut. vi. 4.
Jer. xxiii. 6. xxxiii. 16.
Mal. iii. 1.
Matt. iii. 3.
1 Cor. xv. 47.
Acts x. 36.
Rom. x. 12.
1 Cor. viii. 6.
1 Cor. ii. 8.
Pſ. xxiv. 9.
Jude 4.
Rev. xvii. 14. xix. 16.
Matt. iv. 10.

* Θεῷ μόνον τὸ προσκυνεῖσθαι. κτίσματι κτίσμα ὑ προσκυνεῖ, ἀλλὰ δοῦλος δεσπότην, ὑ κτίσμα Θεόν. *Athan. in Ar. Or.* iii. p. 394.

† Οὗτοι δὲ κτίσμα λέγοντες εἶναι τὸν κύριον, ὑ ὡς κτίσματι λατρεύοντες αὐτῷ, τί διαφέρουσιν ἑλλήνων. *Ath. Or.* i. *in Ar.* p. 296. Heb. i. 6. Rev. v. 12, 13. iv. 11.

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acclamation, ſaying; *To him that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, be the bleſſing, and the honour, and the glory, and the worſhip, and the praiſe for ever. Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his blood—to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Hence the throne of God the Father and of his Son are one and the ſame; *The throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it,* ſaith St. John, ſpeaking of the heavenly city; *For the Son,* ſaith that great Father, *reigning with the ſame royalty of his Father, is ſeated upon the ſame throne with his Father.* To invocate the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is a practice characterizing and diſtinguiſhing Chriſtians from infidels; as when St. Paul inſcribes his Epiſtle to the Church of Corinth, *together with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in every place;* and when Saul is ſaid to *have authority from the chief prieſts to bind all that called upon his name,* ſo that we need not to allege the ſingle example of St. Stephen invoking our Lord. Indeed himſelf informs us, that *the Father had committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men ſhould honour the Son even as they honour the Father.* To wiſh and pray for *grace and peace from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt* is the uſual practice of the Apoſtles, and to diſpenſe them is a prerogative of his, common to him with God his Father. To have the ſame Holy Spirit as the Father unmeaſurably, and to ſend it from himſelf, with commiſſions and inſtructions, and to communicate it freely, are eſpecial characters of ſupreme divinity, and much tranſcending any creature, as St. Athanaſius obſerves; *With authority,* ſaith he, *to give the Spirit doth not ſuit a creature, or a thing made, but is an endowment of God.* Whereas alſo we are often ſeverely prohibited from relying or confiding upon any man, or any creature, (as in that of the Prophet; *Curſed be the man, that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm;*) we are yet allowed, yea we are obliged, to repoſe our truſt and confidence in Chriſt; *Ye truſt in God,* ſaith he himſelf to his diſciples, *truſt alſo in me;* whence St. Paul calleth him emphatically *our hope,* in his compellation to Timo-

Vide Rev. i. 5.

Rev. xxii. 3.

Τήν τε γὰρ τοῦ πατρὸς βασιλείαν βασιλεύων ὁ υἱὸς ἐπὶ τὸν αὐτὸν θρόνον τῷ πατρὶ κάθηται. *Athan. Or.* ii. *in Ar.*

1 Cor. i. 2. Acts ix. 14, 21. Rom. x. 12, 13, 14. 2 Tim. ii. 22.

John v. 23, 24.

2 John iii.

Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. xlii. 2 Theſſ. ii. 16. 1 Theſſ. iii. 12. Tit. iii. 6.

Τὸ δὲ μετ' ἐξουσίας διδόναι τὸ πνεῦμα, οὐ κτίσματος, οὐδὲ ποιήματός ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ Θεοῦ δῶρον. *Ath. Orat.* iii. *in Ar.* p. 388.

Jer. xvii. 5.

John xiv. 1

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thy; *Paul an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, by the commandment of God our Saviour, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, our hope;* which is the ſame title that Jeremiah attributes unto God; *O the hope of Iſrael, the ſaviour thereof in time of trouble.* Hence to him, jointly with God the Father, and the divine Spirit, that ſolemn benediction or prayer is directed; *The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all;* as alſo a parity of higheſt adoration is then together with the ſame divine perſons yielded to him, when we are baptized in his name, and conſecrated to his ſervice.

Col. i. 27. 1 Tim. i. 1. Jer. xiv. 8. 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

The divineſt attributes of God are alſo in the moſt abſolute manner and perfect degree aſſigned to him: eternity, as we diſcourſed before. Immenſity of preſence and power, then implied, when ſpeaking with the Jews he told them that he was then in heaven; and when he promiſes his diſciples, that *he will be with them, whenever they meet in his name;* and alſo, *that he will be with them, to the end of the world.* Infinite wiſdom and knowledge; *for in him are hidden all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge;* and, *Now are we ſure,* ſay the diſciples to him in St. John, *that thou knoweſt all things:* and, *Lord,* ſaith St. Peter, *thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee:* and St. Paul calls him *the wiſdom of God,* and *the power of God:* wherefore ſince God's wiſdom is omniſcient, and his power omnipotent, ſo conſequently is he. In ſhort, whatever attribute or perfection God hath, the ſame hath he; for, *All things,* ſaith he, *that the Father hath, are mine.* What creature without high preſumption could ſay thoſe words concerning the divine Spirit; *He ſhall glorify me, for he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhall ſhew it unto you.*

John iii. 13. Matt. xviii. 20. xxviii. 20. Col. ii. 3. John xvi. 30. xxi. 17. 1 Cor. i. 24. John xvi. 15. John xvi. 14.

The divine attributes he expreſſeth by divineſt operations and works, which are aſcribed to him. It is a moſt divine work to create; this we ſhewed before to have been performed by him: to ſuſtain, and conſerve things in being, is another like work; this he doth; *For he,* ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrews, *upholdeth all things by the word*

Heb. i. 3.

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of his power; and, *By him,* ſaith St. Paul, *all things con-* Col. i. 17.
ſiſt. To perform miracles, or do things ſurmounting the laws and thwarting the courſe of nature; ſuch as by mere word and will rebuking winds and ſeas, curing diſeaſes, ejecting devils, is the property of him, who, as the Pſalmiſt ſays, *alone doeth great wonders.* Particularly to raiſe Pſ. lxxii. 18. lxxxvi. 8, 10. cxxxvi. the dead is a prerogative reſerved by God in his own hand; (for, *The Lord killeth, and the Lord maketh alive;* 4. *he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.*) This our 1 Sam. ii. 6. Deut. xxxii. Lord often did at his pleaſure; for, *As the Father raiſeth* 39. *up the dead, and quickeneth them; even ſo the Son quick-eneth whom he will:* and of himſelf he ſaith in the Apocalypſe; *I have the keys of hell and of death.* Eſpecially to Rev. i. 18. raiſe himſelf, which he aſſumeth to himſelf; (*I,* ſaith he, John x. 17, *lay down my life, that I may take it up again; I have* 18. *power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again:* and, *Demoliſh this temple,* ſaith he again, *and in three* John ii. 19. *days I will rear it;* which it was impoſſible for him to do, and unintelligible how it ſhould be done, otherwiſe than by the divinity reſident in him. To be καρδιογνώστης, ſearching men's hearts and diſcerning their ſecret thoughts, is a peculiar work of him that ſaith, *I the Lord try the heart,* Jer. vii. 10. *I ſearch the reins;* and of our Lord it is ſaid, *He needed* John ii. 25. *not that any ſhould witneſs about a man, for he knew what was in man;* and by many experiments he declared this power. To foreſee and foretell future contingencies to be peculiar to himſelf God ſignified, when in the Prophet he thus challenged the objects of heathen worſhip; *Shew the things to come, that we may know ye are gods;* Iſa. xli. 23. this our Lord did upon ſeveral occaſions, particularly in the caſe of Judas's treaſon; *He knew,* ſaith St. John, John vi. 64. *from the beginning, who they were who did not believe, and who it was that ſhould betray him.* This, I ſay, he did, not as the prophets, by particular arbitrary revelation, but immediately by his own Spirit; whereby even the Prophets themſelves were illuſtrated and inſpired; for it was, as St. Peter ſays, *The Spirit of Chriſt in them which teſti-* 1 Pet. i. 11. *fied beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glories that ſhould follow.* To ſee and know God, (*who inhabits inac-* 1 Tim. vi. 16.

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ceſſible light) is beyond a creature's capacity and ſtate, and yet belongs to him; *None*, ſaith he, *hath ſeen the Father,*
John vi. 46. *ſave he which is of God; he hath ſeen the Father:* and,
Matt. xi. 27. *None knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him.* To remit ſins abſolutely he denied not to be the property of God, when his adverſaries thus objected it; *Who can forgive ſins, except God only?* yet he aſſumed it to himſelf, and aſſerted it by a miracle. To ſave alſo God declared to be a peculiar work of his, when he ſaid it, and reiterated it in Iſaiah and in
Mark ii. 7. Iſ. xliii. 25.
Hoſea: *I am the Lord, and beſide me there is no Saviour;* which act yet, and which title, are no leſs proper to our Lord. In fine, briefly, he claims to himſelf at once the performance of every divine work, when he ſaith, *Whatſoever the Father doeth, that alſo doeth the Son likewiſe.*
Iſa. xliii. 11. xlv. 21. Hoſ. xiii. 4.
John v. 19.

Now all this ſtate and majeſty, all theſe glorious titles, attributes, and works, can we imagine that he *whoſe name is jealous*, as it is in Exodus xxxiv. 14. and *who is jealous of his name*, as it is in Ezekiel xxxix. 25. who ſaid it once and again in the prophet Iſaiah, that *he will not give his glory to another;* can we conceive, I ſay, that he ſhould communicate them, or ſhould ſuffer them to be aſcribed to any mere creature, how eminent ſoever in nature or worth, how dear ſoever upon any regard? for indeed the higheſt creature producible muſt be infinitely diſtant from him, infinitely inferior to him, infinitely baſe and mean in compariſon to him, as to any true perfection or dignity; nor therefore can any creature be in nature capable of ſuch names, ſuch characters, ſuch prerogatives; nor can in any reaſon or juſtice accept or bear them. Our Saviour therefore, unto whom by divine allowance and injunction they are attributed, who willingly admits them, who clearly aſſumes them to himſelf, is truly God.
Deut. vi. 15.
Iſa. xlii. 8. xlviii. 11.
Οὐδ' ἂν ἐτόλμησε δοῦλος ὤν, καὶ τῶν πολλῶν, εἷς ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τρέφεσθαι τοῦ δεσπότου. *Chryſ. in Joh.* i. 18.

5. Now the whole tenor of our religion (according to dictates of Scripture moſt frequent and obvious) aſſerting the unity of God; our Saviour therefore, being God, muſt of neceſſity partake the ſame individual eſſence with God his Father; and it muſt be certainly true, which he affirmeth concerning himſelf; *I and the Father are one,* (ἕν ἐσμεν,
John x. 30. 1 John v. 7.

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are the ſame thing, or one in nature; not εἷς ἐσμὲν, the ſame in perſon, or manner of ſubſiſtence;) and what he again ſaith; *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father;* and, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me;* by the divine eſſence common to both.

John xiv. 9.

Yet hath he not this eſſence from himſelf, but by communication; for, *As the Father hath life in himſelf, ſo he hath given the Son to have life in himſelf.* And ὁ ὢν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, he *that is*, or hath his eſſence, *from God*, is the periphraſis he gives of himſelf. He is not firſt in order, as an original, but is *the image of the inviſible God*, (an image indeed moſt adequate and perfectly like, as having the very ſame nature and eſſence.) He is ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, (*the effulgency of his Father's glory*,) and χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, *the character*, or exact impreſſion, *of his ſubſtance.* He is the internal word, or mind of God, which reſembles him, and yet is not different from him: he is the *life*, the *wiſdom*, the *power* of God; which terms denote the moſt intrinſic and perfect unity. So the Apoſtles, by the moſt appoſite compariſons that nature affords, ſtrive to adumbrate the ineffable manner of that eternal communication of the divine nature from God the Father to our Saviour; the which is that generation, whereupon the relation, about which we ſpeak, is founded; or, becauſe of which our Lord is moſt truly and properly called, *The only begotten Son of God.* For, if to produce a like in any kind or degree, be to generate; then to give a being without any diſſimilitude or diſparity is the moſt proper generation: our Saviour therefore hence truly is the Son of God the Father. And that he is ſo only, that no other beſide him hath been ever thus begotten, is evident; for that as no reaſon of ours could have informed us, that our Saviour himſelf was thus begotten, ſo no revelation hath ſhewed us that any other hath been; and we therefore cannot without extreme temerity ſuppoſe it. We are ſufficiently inſtructed that all other divine productions, together with the relations grounded on them, are different from this; by creation things receive a being from God infinitely diſtant from, infinitely unequal and unlike to, the divine eſſence; and

Rev. xxi. 22. The Lord God Almighty is its temple and the Lamb.

John v. 26. vi. 46.

Col. i. 15. 2 Cor. iv. 4. John xiv. 9. Heb. i. 3.

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that *filiation*, or ſonſhip, which doth ſtand upon adoption and grace, is wholly in kind different from this. And the communication of the divine eſſence jointly from the Father and Son to the Holy Spirit, doth in manner (although the manner thereof be wholly incomprehenſible to us) ſo differ from this, that in the Holy Scripture (the only guide of our conception, and of our ſpeech in matters of this nature, far ſurpaſſing our reaſon) it is never called generation; and therefore we muſt not preſume to think or call it ſo.

Ὡς καὶ ἡμᾶς συμμορφούμενοι κατὰ χάριν, τὴν δι' αὐτοῦ, πρὸς τὴν τῆς υἱοθεσίας ἀναβαίνομεν δόξαν. *Cyril. Al.*

But let ſo much ſuffice for explication of the point; a point repreſented in Scripture ſo conſiderable, that the belief thereof (if it have that ſincerity and that ſtrength as to diſpoſe our hearts to a due love and reverence of the Son of God, attended with, or atteſted to by, a faithful obedience to his laws) doth raiſe us alſo to the privilege of becoming the ſons of God, and doth myſtically unite us to him, and elevateth us above the world; ſo doth St. John teach us; *To as many*, ſaith he, *as received him*, (received him as the Son of God, or believed him to be ſo,) *to them gave he the power* (or the privilege) *to become the ſons of God:* and, *Whoſoever*, ſaith he, *ſhall confeſs that Jeſus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God:* and, *Who*, ſaith he again, *is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jeſus is the Son of God?* of ſo great importance is the point. Of which I ſhall only now farther briefly propoſe ſome practical applications.

John i. 12.

1 John iv. 15.

1 John v. 5.

1. We may hence learn whence the performances and the ſufferings of Chriſt become of ſo high worth and ſo great efficacy. *Wonder not*, ſaith St. Cyril the Catechiſt, *if the whole world was redeemed; for it was not a bare man, but the only Son of God that died for it.* It is not ſo ſtrange, that God's only Son's mediation ſhould be ſo acceptable and ſo effectual with God; that the blood of God's deareſt Son ſhould be ſo precious in God's ſight, that the interceſſion of one ſo near him ſhould be ſo prevalent with him. What could God refuſe to the Son of his love earneſtly ſoliciting and ſuing in our behalf? what debts might not ſo rich a price diſcharge? what

Μὴ θαυμάζῃς εἰ κόσμος ὅλος ἐλυτρώθη, οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἄνθρωπος ψιλὸς, ἀλλ' υἱὸς Θεοῦ μονογενὴς, ὁ ὑπεραποθανόντων, &c. *Cyrill. Catech.* 13.

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anger could not ſo noble a ſacrifice appeaſe? what juſtice could not ſo full a diſpenſation ſatisfy? *We were not*, St. Peter telleth us, *redeemed with corruptible things, with ſilver or gold*, (no; whole Indies of ſuch ſtuff would not have been ſufficient to ranſom one ſoul;) *but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot.* It was not, as the Apoſtle to the Hebrews remarketh, by the *blood of goats and heifers*, that our ſins were expiated, (no; whole hecatombs would have nothing availed to that purpoſe;) but *by the blood of Chriſt, who by the eternal Spirit offered up himſelf ſpotleſs unto God*, (who as the eternal Son of God did offer himſelf a ſacrifice not to be blamed or refuſed.) *It is*, as St. John ſaith, *the blood of Chriſt, the Son of God, which purgeth us from all ſin.* And well indeed might a Perſon ſo infinitely noble, worthy, and excellent, be a ſufficient ranſom for whole worlds of miſerable offenders and captives. Well might his voluntary undergoing ſuch inconveniences and infirmities of life, his ſuffering ſo diſgraceful and painful a death, countervail the deſerved puniſhment of all mankind; well might his ſo humble, ſo free, ſo perfect ſubmiſſion to God's will infinitely pleaſe God, and render him propitious to us. *Well might*, as St. Athanaſius ſpeaks, *the very appearing of ſuch a Saviour in the fleſh be a general ranſom of ſin, and become ſalvation to every creature:* the which St. Paul thus expreſſeth; *God ſending his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin, condemned ſin in the fleſh:* for if our diſpleaſing, injuring, and diſhonouring him, who is ſo great and ſo good, doth aggravate our offence; the equal excellency and dignity of the Perſon, ſubmitting in our behalf to the performance of all due obedience and all proper ſatisfaction, may proportionably advance the reparation offered, and compenſate the wrong done to God. Well therefore may we believe, and ſay with comfort, after the Apoſtle; Τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν; *Who ſhall criminate againſt the elect of God? it is God that juſtifieth*, (it is the Son of God, it is God himſelf, who ſatisfies divine juſtice for us;) *who is there that condemns? it is Chriſt that died.*

1 Pet. i. 18, 19.
Pſ. xlix. 7.
Heb. ix. 12, 13, 14. x. 4, 8, 10.
1 John i. 7.
Ἡ ἐνανθρώπησις παρουσία τοῦ σωτῆρος θανάτου λύτρον, καὶ κτίσεως πάσης σωτηρία γίγνεται. *Athan. ad Adelph.*
Rom. viii. 3.
Rom. viii. 33.

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2. We may hence be informed, what reverence and adoration is due from us to our Saviour, and why we *must honour the Son, even as we honour the Father*; why even all *the angels* must *worship him*; why *every thing in heaven, and earth, and beneath the earth must bend the knee* (that is, must yield veneration and observance) *to him*; why *by all creatures* whatever the same preeminence is to be ascribed, and the same adoration paid jointly and equally *to God the Father Almighty, who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb*, his blessed Son, who *standeth at his right hand*. Such divine glory and worship we are obliged to yield him, because he is the Son of God, one in essence, and therefore equal in majesty, with his Father: were it not so, it would be injury to God, and sacrilege to do it; God would not *impart his glory*, we should not attribute it unto another. So this consideration grounds our duty and justifies our practice of worshipping our Lord; it also encourages us to perform it with faith and hope; for thence we may be assured, that he, being the Son of God omniscient, doth hear and mind us; being the Son of God omnipotent, he can thoroughly help and save us; being also, as such, absolutely and immensely good, he will be always disposed to afford what is good and convenient for us in our need.

John v. 23. Heb. i. 6. Phil. ii. 10. Rev. v. 13.

3. We hence may perceive the infinite goodness of God toward us, and our correspondent obligation to love and thankfulness toward him. *In this*, saith St. John, *was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. In this*, adds he, *is love*, (love indeed, love admirable and inconceivable,) *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his only begotten Son to be a propitiation for our sins*. Can there be imagined any equal, any like expression of kindness, of mercy, of condescension, as for a prince, himself glorious and happy, most freely to deliver up, out from his own bosom, his own only most dearly beloved Son, to the suffering most base contumelies and most grievous pains for the welfare of his enemies, of rebels and traitors to him? even such

Tit. iii. 4. Eph. ii. 4. 1 John iv. 9, 10.

ath been God's goodneſs to us: the Son of God, the air of eternal majeſty, was by his Father ſent down rom heaven, (from the boſom of his glory and bliſs,) to ut on the form of a ſervant, to endure the inconveniences f this mortal ſtate, to undergo the greateſt indignities nd ſorrows; that we, *who were alienated, and enemies in* Col. i. 21. *ur mind by wicked works, might be reconciled to God;* 1 John iv. 9. ight be freed from wrath and miſery; might be capable f everlaſting life and ſalvation: ſuitable to ſuch unexreſſible goodneſs ought our gratitude to be toward God: hat affectionate ſenſe in our hearts, what thankful acnowledgments with our mouths, what dutiful obſervance n all our actions, doth ſo wonderful an inſtance of mercy nd goodneſs deſerve and require from us?

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4. This conſideration may fitly ſerve to beget in us ope and confidence in God upon any occaſions of need r diſtreſs; to ſupport and comfort us in all our afflictions; or, *He that ſo loved us, that he gave his only begotten Son* John iii. 16. *or our ſalvation and happineſs*, how can we ever ſuſpect im as unwilling to beſtow on us whatever elſe ſhall to is wiſdom appear needful or convenient for us? He that ut of pure charity and pity toward us did part with a ewel ſo ineſtimable, how can any thing ſeem much for im to give us? it is the conſolatory diſcourſe of St. Paul; *He*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *that did not ſpare his own Son, but* Rom. viii. *elivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him* 32. *reely give us all things?* all things that we truly need, ll things that we can reaſonably deſire, all things which re good and fit for us.

5. St. John applieth this conſideration to the begetting harity in us toward our brethren. *Beloved*, ſaith he, *if* 1 John iv. *od ſo loved us*, (as to ſend his only begotten Son into 12. he world, that we might live by him,) *we ought alſo to ove one another*. If God ſo lovingly gave up his only Son for our ſakes, what, (in grateful regard to him, in bſervant imitation of him,) what expreſſions, I ſay, of harity and good-will ought we to yield toward our brehren? what endeavours, what goods, what life of ours hould ſeem too dear unto us for to expend or impart for

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their good? shall we be unwilling to take any pains or suffer any loss for them, for whom (together with ourselves) the Son of God hath undergone so much trouble, so much disgrace, so much hardship? shall we, I say, be uncharitable, when the Son of God hath laid upon us such an obligation, hath set before us such an example?

6. This consideration also may inform us, and should mind us, concerning the dignity of our nature and of our condition; and consequently how in respect to them we should behave ourselves. If God did so much consider and value man, as for his benefit to debase his only Son; if the Son of God himself hath deigned to assume our nature, and to advance it into a conjunction with the divine nature, then is man surely no inconsiderable or contemptible thing; then should we despise no man, whom God hath so regarded and so honoured; then ought we not to neglect or slight ourselves: if we were worthy of God's so great care, we ought not to seem unworthy of our own. We ought to value ourselves, not so indeed as to be proud of so undeserved honour, but so as to be sensible thereof, and to suit our demeanour thereto. Reflecting upon these things should make us to disdain to do any thing unworthy that high regard of God, and that honourable alliance unto him. It should breed in us noble thoughts, worthy desires, and all excellent dispositions of
Heb. ii. 14. soul conformable to such relations; it should engage us unto a constant practice, beseeming them whom God hath so dignified, whom the Son of God hath vouchsafed to make his brethren: by affecting any thing mean or sordid, by doing any thing base or wicked, we greatly undervalue ourselves, we much disparage that glorious family, into which, by the Son of God's incarnation, we are inserted. Ταύτης οὖν τῆς τιμῆς ἀξίαν τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιδειξώμεθα, καὶ μηδὲν ἔχωμεν κοινὸν πρὸς τὴν γῆν. *Let us therefore*, saith St. Chrysostom, *shew a philosophy worthy of this honour; having nothing common with this earth.* (In Joh. i. Hom. 18.)

7. This consideration doth much aggravate all impiety and sin. Wilful sin upon this account appeareth not only disobedience to our Creator and natural Lord, but enor-

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ıs offence againſt the infinite bounty and mercy and deſcenſion of our Saviour; a moſt heinous abuſing the ı of God, who came down into this homely and humſtate on purpoſe *to bleſs us, in turning every one of us* Acts iii. 26. *n our iniquities;* to free us from the grievous dominion Rom. vi. 22. from the woful effects of ſin; we thereby fruſtrate the ł gracious intentions of God, and defeat the moſt adıble project that could be for our benefit and ſalvation: thereby *trample upon the Son of God, recrucify him, and* Heb. vi. 6. *him to an open ſhame:* ſo the Apoſtle to the Hebrews ɜth us, implying the heinous guilt and ſad conſequence ɔoing ſo; *He,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *that deſpiſed Moſes's law* Heb. x. 28. *! without mercy;—Of how much ſorer puniſhment, ſup· ye, ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the cove- t, wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy thing?*

. Laſtly, This conſideration may ſerve to beget in us igh eſteem of the diſpenſation evangelical, and hearty miſſion thereto. Almighty God, (as is ſignified in the able,) after ſeveral proviſions for the good of mankind, Luke xx. 13. ſeveral meſſages from heaven to the world here, did laſt ſend his Son, with this expectation; *Surely they l reverence my Son:* and ſurely much reaſon he had to ect the greateſt reverence to be yielded to his perſon; readieſt credence and obedience to his word. For if r declaration of God concerning his will, or our duty, never proceeding from him, (either by dictate of natureaſon, or by the inſtruction of prophets, or by the niſtry of angels,) ought to be entertained with great rect and obſervance; much more ſhould the overtures of ateſt mercy and favour exhibited by his own Son (on rpoſe ſent unto us to diſcover them) be embraced with heſt regard, and humbleſt reverence, and moſt hearty npliance. It is the Apoſtle to the Hebrews his diſırſe and inference; *Therefore,* (ſaith he, therefore, Heb. i. 2. ii. 1, 3. ɜauſe *God hath in theſe laſt times ſpoken unto us by his* ı,) *we ought περισσοτέρως προσέχειν, to give more* (abunıt, or more) *earneſt heed to the things which we have ard; for,* ſubjoins he, *how ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect*

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so great salvation; which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? Ταῦτ' ὖν διηνεκῶς φέροντες, καὶ ἀναλογιζόμενοι ἐκκαθάρωμεν ἡμῶν τὸν βίον, καὶ λαμπρὸν ποιήσωμεν. *Continually therefore revolving and recounting these things, let us cleanse our life, and make it bright:* so we conclude with good St. Chrysostom.

Vide Chrys. tom. vi. p. 698, &c.

Almighty God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him; grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Our Lord.

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Eph. iv. 5.

One Lord.

5 the name of *God* (truly common to all three Perſons he Bleſſed Trinity) is (not in way of excluſion, but) according to a myſterious peculiarity (κατ' οἰκονομίαν, in way diſpenſation, accommodated to our inſtruction, as the ek Fathers expreſs it) attributed to God the Father, o is the Fountain of the Deity, and firſt in order among divine Perſons; ſo likewiſe is the name *Lord*, truly mon to the other Perſons, peculiarly (though alſo not luſively) aſcribed and appropriated unto God the Son; o therefore in the ſtyle of the New Teſtament, which e fully hath revealed him, is called ſometimes abſo-ly *Lord*, ſometimes *the Lord Jeſus*, ſometimes *our d*; to acknowledge and call him ſo, being the eſpecial y, and the diſtinctive mark or character of a Chriſtian: *to us*, as *there is one God and Father of all*, and *one y Spirit*, ſo there is, as St. Paul here in my text doth *one Lord*. And otherwhere; *There be* (ſaith he, there according to popular eſtimation and worldly uſe) *gods ny, and lords many; but to us there is one God the Fa-, and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. Hence to call upon the e of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt (that is, by confeſſion and ctice to acknowledge him *our Lord*) gives a periphraſis, deſcription of a Chriſtian, (*To the church of God that is*

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Luke ii. 11. Ὅς ἐστι Χριστὸς, Κύριος.

1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.

1 Cor. i. 2. Acts ix. 14.

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in Corinth, ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus, called to be ſaints, together with all that call upon the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in every place; that is, together with all Chriſtians everywhere; ſo doth St. Paul inſcribe his firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians;) whence, *No man,* ſaith he in the ſame Epiſtle, *can call Jeſus Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt;* that is, no man can heartily embrace Chriſtianity without the gracious aſſiſtance of God's Holy Spirit. The reaſon of which appellation being ſo peculiarly attributed unto Chriſt, may be, for that, beſide the natural right unto dominion over us, neceſſarily appertaining to him as our God, who hath made us, and doth preſerve us, there are divers other reſpects and grounds ſupervenient, and accruing to him from what he hath undertaken, performed, and undergone for us, in ſpontaneous obedience to the will of God his Father, upon which alſo the title of *Lord* is due unto him: the which to declare firſt, then to apply them unto our practice, ſhall be the ſubject and ſcope of our preſent diſcourſe.

1 Cor. xii. 3.

In whatſoever notion we take the word *Lord,* either as a prince over ſubjects, or as a maſter over ſervants, or as an owner of goods, or as a preceptor and preſident over diſciples, or as a leader and captain to followers, or as a perſon ſingularly eminent above inferiors, he is according to all ſuch notions truly *our Lord.*

According to whatever capacity we diſtinctly or abſtractively conſider him, either as the *Son of God,* or as the *Son of man,* or as θεάνθρωπος, (jointly *God and man,* united in one perſon,) as *Jeſus* our Saviour, as *the Chriſt of God,* he is *our Lord.*

If we examine all imaginable foundations of juſt dominion, eminence in nature and power, the collation of being or preſervation thereof, donation, conqueſt, purchaſe, merit, voluntary compact; upon all theſe he hath a right of lordſhip over us duly grounded.

I. He is, I ſay, firſt, *our Lord* according to every notion and acception of the word *Lord.*

He is our Prince and Governor, we are his ſubjects and vaſſals; for to him it was ſaid, *Thy throne, O God, is for*

Heb. i. 8.

ever and ever; the ſceptre of thy kingdom is a right ſceptre. Of him it was prophefied, that *the government ſhould be upon his ſhoulder*, and that *of the increaſe of his government and peace there ſhould be no end;* he is *the King of Iſrael*, or of the Church, who, as the angel told the bleſſed Virgin, *ſhall reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever and ever. God hath given him head over all things to the Church.* So is he a Prince moſt abſolute, endued with ſovereign right and power, crowned with glorious majeſty, enjoying all preeminences, and exerciſing all acts ſuitable to regal dignity, in reſpect to all things, and particularly in regard to us.

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Iſ. ix. 6, 7.

Luke i. 33. Eph. i. 22. 1 Cor. xv. 27.

He alſo is our Maſter, and we are his ſervants; the Church is a houſe and family, whereof he is the οἰκοδεσπότης, or houſeholder; *If*, ſaith he, *they have called the Maſter of the houſe Beelzebub how much more thoſe of his houſehold?* (τὺς οἰκιακὺς αὐτῦ, *famulos ejus*, his domeſtics, or menial ſervants.) *All the family in heaven and earth are named of him*, ſaith St. Paul; that is, the whole Church (both triumphant above in heaven, and militant here on earth) is his family, or called the family of him, as of its Lord. *Chriſt*, ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrews, *is as a ſon over his houſe, whoſe houſe are we: He that is called free is a ſervant of Chriſt:* and, *We ſerve the Lord Chriſt:* and, *We have a Maſter in heaven*, ſaith St. Paul: *Bleſſed*, ſaith our Lord himſelf, *is that ſervant, whom his Lord coming ſhall find ſo doing;* that is, whom *Chriſt, our Lord*, coming to judgment, ſhall find diſcharging his duty faithfully. He indeed as a good Maſter governeth, ordereth, and maintaineth his family well; furniſheth and feedeth it with all neceſſary proviſions; protecteth it from all want and all miſchief; appointeth to every one therein his due work and ſervice, and payeth to each his due wages and recompence.

1 Tim. iii. 15. Matt. xxiv. 45. x. 25.

Eph. iii. 15.

Heb. iii. 6. 1 Cor. vii. 22. Col. iii. 24. Eph. vi. 9. Col. iv. 1. Matt. xxiv. 46.

1 Cor. iii. 8. Luke vi. 38. Rev. xxii. 12.

He is alſo our Owner, or the Poſſeſſor and Proprietary of us; *The Lord that bought us*, as St. Peter calls him; and conſequently, who poſſeſſeth and enjoyeth us. *We are not our own*, ſaith St. Paul; *for we were bought with a price:* whence we are become entirely ſubject to his diſpoſal.

2 Pet. ii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. vii. 23.

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He likewise is our Preceptor, or Teacher; that is, the Lord of our understanding, which is subject to the bent of his dictates; and the Lord of our practice, which is to be directed by his precepts. *Ye*, saith he, *call me Master, and Lord*, (διδάσκαλον, καὶ κύριον, *Doctor* and *Lord*,) *and ye say well, for so I am*: and, *Be ye not called masters*, (καθηγηταὶ, guides in doctrine,) *for one is your Master, even Christ*: and, *Every thought of ours*, saith St. Paul, *is to be captivated* to the *obedience of Christ*. Such, as infallibly wise, and perfectly veracious, he necessarily is unto us; such he is, as sent on purpose by God to enlighten our minds with the knowledge of heavenly truth, and *to guide our feet into the ways of peace*; whence we cannot but be obliged to embrace his doctrine, and to observe the rules which he prescribeth us.

John xiii. 13. Matt. xxiii. 10. 2 Cor. x. 5. John i. Luke i. 79.

He is therefore also our Captain and Leader; whose orders we must observe, whose conduct we should follow, whose pattern we are to regard and imitate in all things: he is styled ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως, *the Captain of our faith*; ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς, *the Captain of our life*; ἀρχηγὸς σωτηρίας, *the Captain of our salvation*; ἀρχιποίμην, our *chief Shepherd*, the *Apostle, and High Priest of our profession*; the *Bishop of our souls*. In fine, he, according to what St. Paul says, ἐν πᾶσι πρωτεύω, *hath in all things the primacy* and *preeminence*; so that according to all notions and senses of *lordship* he is our Lord; but chiefly he is meant such in the principal sense, as having an absolute right and power to command and govern us.

1 Pet. ii. 21. Heb. xii. 2. ii. 10. Acts iii. 15. v. 31. 1 Pet. ii. 25. v. 4. Heb. iii. 1. Col. i. 18.

II. *Christ* is also *our Lord* according to every capacity or respect of *nature* or *office*, that we can consider appertaining to him.

1. He is *our Lord* as by *nature* the *Son of God*, partaking of the divine essence and perfections: he as such being endued with eminence superlative and with power irresistible; as such having created all things, and upholding all things; whence all things necessarily and justly are subject to his order and disposal; all things according to all right and reason are to be governed, possessed, and used according to his pleasure. Hence is that most august and most peculiar

name, *JEHOVAH*, (denoting either independency and indefectibility of ſubſiſtence, or uncontrollable and infallible efficacy in operation, or both of them together; which therefore is by the Greek interpreters fitly rendered Κύριος, and after them *Lord* by our tranſlators; for the word κύραν doth ſignify to ſubſiſt, and κύρος is uſed to denote efficacy, ratification, ſtedfaſt power or authority) aſſigned to him; *This is his name whereby he ſhall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*, ſaith Jeremiah of him: and, *I will have mercy upon the houſe of Judah, and will ſave them by Jehovah their God*, ſaith God in Hoſea concerning the ſalvation accompliſhed by him: and in the Prophet Zechariah he thus ſpeaks of himſelf; *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midſt of thee, and thou ſhalt know that the Lord of hoſts hath ſent me unto thee:* where it is ſaid, that Jehovah, being ſent by Jehovah, ſhould come and dwell in the Church, enlarged by acceſſion of the Gentiles: who can that be, but *our Lord Chriſt*, who dwelt among us, and was by God his Father ſent unto us? And what in the Old Teſtament is ſpoken of Jehovah is by infallible expoſitors in the New attributed to our Lord; *Sanctify Jehovah Sabaoth, and he ſhall be for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and for a rock of offence;* ſo did Iſaiah ſpeak; and his words are by St. Peter and by St. Paul applied to *Chriſt*. *Whoſoever ſhall call upon the name of Jehovah ſhall be delivered;* ſo did the Prophet Joel foretell concerning the latter days; and St. Paul accommodates it to the ſalvation obtained by confeſſing the name of Chriſt. In Malachi, Jehovah ſaith, that *he would ſend his meſſenger to prepare his way before him;* this, according to the Evangeliſts' interpretation, was verified in St. John the Baptiſt's *preparing the way before* our Saviour. Likewiſe, what Iſaiah ſaid, *The voice of him that cried in the wilderneſs, Prepare the way of Jehovah*, is by all the Evangeliſts applied to the Baptiſt, as *the voice crying*, and to our Saviour, as the *Lord coming: Chriſt* therefore is the *Lord Jehovah*, independent and immutable in eſſence and in power.

Jer. xxiii. 6. Hoſ. i. 7. Zech. x. 12. Jehovah à Jehova. Gen. xix. 24. apud Iren. iii. 6. Iſa. viii. 13, 14. 1 Pet. ii. 7. Rom. ix. 33. Joel ii. 32. Rom. x. 9, 10, 13. Mal. iii. 1. Matt. iii. 3. Mark i. 2, 3. John i. 23. Luke vii. 27. iii. 4. Iſa. xl. 3.

The word *Adon* alſo, which more immediately and

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properly doth signify *dominion*, (and which put absolutely doth belong to God,) is plainly attributed to our Saviour. *The Lord* (*Jehovah*) *said to my Lord* (*le Adonai;*) that is, God the Father to Christ the Son, yet Lord of David, as our Saviour himself expounds it. And, *The Lord* (*ha Adon*) *shall come to his temple;* so in Malachi it is prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. According to this notion was it, that St. Thomas, being by our Saviour's resurrection convinced of his divinity, cried out, *My God, and my Lord:* in this sense it was, that St. Peter called our Saviour *Lord*, when he ascribed omniscience to him, saying, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* Upon this account, St. John the Baptist said, *He that cometh from above is above all things*, which St. Paul expresseth thus; *The second man is the Lord from heaven.* So is *Christ*, as he is God, *our Lord.*

Ps. cx. 1. Matt. xxii. 43. Mal. iii. 1. John xx. 28. John xxi. 17. John iii. 31. 1 Cor. xv. 47.

2. He is also our Lord, as *man*, by the voluntary appointment and free donation of God his Father; in regard to the excellency of his Person, and to the merit of his performances. God did by gift and delegation confer upon him a supereminent degree of dignity and authority, with power to execute the most lordly acts of enacting, of dispensing with, and of abrogating laws; of judging, of remitting offences; of dispensing rewards, and of punishing transgressors. The Scripture is copious and emphatical in declaring this point both in general terms and with respect to particulars. *Let all the house of Israel*, saith St. Peter, *know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ, even this Jesus, whom ye did crucify:* and, *Thou hast given him power over all flesh: All things are delivered unto me by my Father: All power is given me in heaven, and upon earth: The Father hath loved the Son, and hath given all things into his hand;* saith he concerning himself: and, *Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow — and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Lord:*

Acts ii. 36. John xvii. 2. Luke x. 22. Mat. xi. 27. xxviii. 18. John iii 35. xiii. 3. Phil. ii. 6—11.

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and, *God raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church:* and, *We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour:* and, *The Lamb which was slain is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and blessing:* and, *When the Son of man sits upon the throne of his glory, ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* In which places, as in others of the same importance, it is signified generally, that beside the dominion, naturally belonging to our Saviour as God, there hath been conferred on him, as man, an universal dominion over all things in regard to what, as man, he did and suffered; and that in him, as the Apostle to the Hebrews observeth and discourseth, that hath been signally fulfilled, which the Psalmist acknowledgeth, and praiseth God for, in respect to man; *Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hand, and didst put all things in subjection under his feet.* In him also was accomplished the prophetical vision of Daniel; *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man—And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* It is also particularly expressed of him, that to him, as man, is committed a power legislative; *I say unto you,* I command you, is the style he commonly used: and, *The Son of man,* said he, *is Lord of the sabbath;* (that is, hath a power to dispense with the observation thereof, or to abrogate the positive law concerning it; which by parity of reason infers a general power of constituting and rescinding laws of the like nature.) The prerogative also of remitting sins was given him; *That ye may,* saith he, *know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins,* (*then saith he*

Eph. i. 20.
1 Pet. iii. 22.
Heb. ii. 9.
Rev. v. 12.
Matt. xix. 28. xxv. 31. xxvi. 64.
Heb. ii. 7, 8.
Ps. viii. 7.
Dan. vii. 13, 14.
John xv. 10, 12, 14.
Matt. ix. 6.
Luke v. 24.

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to the ſick of the palſy,) Ariſe, take up thy bed, and walk: and, *The God of our fathers,* ſaith St. Peter, *hath raiſed Jeſus, whom ye ſlew, and hanged on a tree; him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Iſrael, and remiſſion of ſins.* The adminiſtration of juſtice and judgment he thus alſo hath; for he is, ὡρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ κριτὴς, *ordained by God the judge of quick and dead;* God hath appointed to judge the world, ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισε, *by the man whom he hath ordained: The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son—and hath given him authority to execute judgment alſo,* ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστί· *becauſe,* or whereas, *he is the Son of man:* ſo alſo for the prerogative of diſtributing rewards and inflicting puniſhments; *The Son of man,* ſaith he, *ſhall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and reward every man according to his work.* Thus by emphatical expreſſion it is ſignified, that Chriſt, *as man,* is our *Lord,* by God's appointment and donation. We may alſo conſider, that our Saviour, *as the Son of David,* and conſequently by a right of ſucceſſion, according to divine ordination, *as King of Iſrael,* (to the which all Chriſtians are become proſelytes; for, προσεληλύθατε Σιὼν ὄρει, *Ye are proſelytes to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem,* ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrews,) is our Lord; according to that of the angel to the bleſſed Virgin; *He ſhall be great, and ſhall be called the Son of the Higheſt; and the Lord God ſhall give him the throne of David his Father; and he ſhall reign over the houſe of Iſrael for ever and ever: Of the increaſe of his government there ſhall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with judgment and with juſtice from henceforth even for ever:* ſo Iſaiah foretold of him; and many like paſſages occur in other prophets.

Acts v. 30, 31.
Acts x. 42. xvii. 31.
John v. 22, 27.
Matt. xvi. 27.
Heb. xii. 22.
Luke i. 32.
Iſa. ix. 7.
Acts ii. 30.

3. He alſo conſidered as θεάνθρωπος (*as God and man,* united in one Perſon) is plainly our Lord. For whatever naturally did appertain to God, whatever freely was (in way of gift or reward) communicated to man, doth accrue to the Perſon, and is attributed thereto, in conſequence of

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the union hypoſtatical, or perſonal. It was indeed by virtue thereof, that *the man Chriſt Jeſus* became capable of ſo high preferments; wherefore moſt properly upon this conſideration is Chriſt *the Lord of all*, as St. Peter ſtyles him; *having all things (him only excepted, who did ſubject all things to him) put under his feet.* Acts x. 36. 1 Cor. xv. 27.

4. If we alſo conſider him as *Jeſus*, our Saviour, that notion doth involve acts of dominion, and thence reſulteth a title thereto: nothing more becomes a *Lord*, than to protect and ſave; none better deſerves the right and the name of a *Lord*, than a Saviour; wherefore thoſe titles are well conjoined; *I am the Lord, and beſide me there is no Saviour*, ſaith God in Iſaiah of himſelf; and, *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to his right hand*, ſaith St. Peter concerning Jeſus. Iſa. xliii. 11. Acts v. 31.

5. Likewiſe if he be conſidered as *the Chriſt*, that eſpecially implieth him anointed, and conſecrated to ſovereign dominion, as king of the Church: well therefore did the angel expreſs his joyful meſſage when he told the ſhepherds; *I bring you good tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Chriſt the Lord:* and St. Peter well joined them, ſaying, *Let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.* Thus in all reſpects is *Chriſt* our *Lord.* Luke ii. 11. Acts ii. 36.

III. Let us alſo farther briefly ſurvey the ſeveral grounds upon which dominion may be built, and we ſhall ſee that upon all accounts he is our *Lord.*

1. [a] An uncontrollable power and ability to govern is one certain ground of dominion; he that is endued therewith, it is neceſſary that we ſhould ſubmit to him, it is reaſonable willingly to admit him for our Lord: per-

[a] Ὁ πρῶτος (ὡς ἔοικεν) καὶ κυριώτατος νόμος, τῷ σώζεσθαι δυναμένῳ, τὸν σώζειν δυνάμενον, ἄρχοντα κατὰ φύσιν ἀποδίδωσι. *Plut. in Pelop.*

Πρεσβύτερε γοῦν δεῖ τῷ κρείττονι κατὰ φύσιν ἡγεῖσθαι τοῦ χείρονος. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* vii. (p. 506.)

Τὸ δυνάμενον φύσει προορᾶν ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει. *Ariſt. Pol.* i. 1, 3, 4.

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ſons ſo qualified, Ariſtotle telleth us, have a natural title to dominion; as, on the contrary, perſons weak, (in power or in wiſdom,) unable to protect themſelves, and unfit to manage things, are naturally ſubjects and ſervants. This ground eminently agrees to him, as being by nature the Almighty God, who can do all things, whom nothing can reſiſt; and alſo for that *all things are given into his hand*, all things are put under his feet. Hence he is moſt able to protect us; *the gates of hell cannot prevail againſt his Church; none can ſnatch us out of his hand; he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt them that come to God through him.*

John xiii. 3.
Matt. xvi. 18.
John x. 28.
Heb. vii. 25.

2. To make, to preſerve, to provide and diſpenſe maintenance, are alſo clear grounds of dominion; for what can we more juſtly claim dominion over, than over our own inventions and works; over that which we continually keep and nouriſh; over that which wholly depends upon us, and ſubſiſts merely by our pleaſure? Since then *in him we live, and move, and have our being;* ſince we have derived all our being from him, (our being natural as men, and ſpiritual as Chriſtians,) and are by him, *who upholdeth all things*, ſuſtained therein; ſince, as to all our powers and in all our actions, we depend upon him; for *without him we can do nothing*, and *all our ſufficiency is of him;* he ſurely is our Lord, having an abſolute right to diſpoſe of us, to order us, and to uſe us, according to his diſcretion and pleaſure. We thence have reaſon to render that acknowledgment of the elders in the Revelation to him; *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the glory, and the honour, and the power; for thou haſt created all things, and for thy will they are, and they were created;* to confeſs and celebrate him as our Lord, for that, as it is in the Pſalm, *It is he that made us, and not we ourſelves; we are his people, and the ſheep of his paſture.* [b] Thus by birth, and privilege of nature, as the Son of

Acts xvii. 28.
Heb. i. 3.
Col. i. 17.
John xv. 5.
2 Cor. iii. 5.
Rev. iv. 11.
Pſal. c. 3.

b Χριστὸς φύσει Κύριος, καὶ βασιλεὺς ἀΐδιος ὢν οὐχ ὅτι ἀπεστίλλεται μᾶλλον γίνεται Κύριος· ἐδὶ τότε ἀρχὴν λαμβάνει τοῦ εἶναι Κύριος, καὶ βασιλεὺς, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐστὶ ἀεὶ, τοῦτο καὶ τότε κατὰ σάρκα πεποίηται· καὶ λυτρωσάμενος πάντας γίνεται ᾗ ἐστὶ ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν Κύριος. *Ath. Orat.* iii. *in Ar.* pag. 385.

the union hypoſtatical, or perſonal. It was indeed by virtue thereof, that *the man Chriſt Jeſus* became capable of ſo high preferments; wherefore moſt properly upon this conſideration is Chriſt *the Lord of all*, as St. Peter ſtyles him; *having all things (him only excepted, who did ſubject all things to him) put under his feet.* Acts x. 36. 1 Cor. xv. 27.

4. If we alſo conſider him as *Jeſus*, our Saviour, that notion doth involve acts of dominion, and thence reſulteth a title thereto: nothing more becomes a *Lord*, than to protect and ſave; none better deſerves the right and the name of a *Lord*, than a Saviour; wherefore thoſe titles are well conjoined; *I am the Lord, and beſide me there is no Saviour*, ſaith God in Iſaiah of himſelf; and, *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to his right hand*, ſaith St. Peter concerning Jeſus. Iſa. xliii. 11. Acts v. 31.

5. Likewiſe if he be conſidered as *the Chriſt*, that eſpecially implieth him anointed, and conſecrated to ſovereign dominion, as king of the Church: well therefore did the angel expreſs his joyful meſſage when he told the ſhepherds; *I bring you good tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Chriſt the Lord*: and St. Peter well joined them, ſaying, *Let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.* Thus in all reſpects is *Chriſt* our *Lord*. Luke ii. 11. Acts ii. 36.

III. Let us alſo farther briefly ſurvey the ſeveral grounds upon which dominion may be built, and we ſhall ſee that upon all accounts he is our *Lord*.

1. [a] An uncontrollable power and ability to govern is one certain ground of dominion; he that is endued therewith, it is neceſſary that we ſhould ſubmit to him, it is reaſonable willingly to admit him for our Lord: per-

[a] Ὁ κρῶνος (ἐν ἔαυτῷ) καὶ κεκρατηκὼς νίκαις, τῇ κάλλει δὲ καὶ τῷ μεγέθει δεσπόσας, τὸν αἰῶνα δεσπόσας, ἔχοντα κατὰ φύσιν ἀνακλίσεις. *Plut. in Pelop.*

Πρεσβύτερον γὰρ δὴ τῇ κρίσει κατὰ φύσιν ἡγεῖσθαι τοῦ χείρονος. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* vii. (p. 506.)

Τὸ δεσπόζον φύσει κρεῖττον ἔχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει. *Ariſt. Pol.* i. 1, 2, 4.

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the law of sin ruling in our members; serving divers lusts and pleasures; being in our actions guided by a *carnal mind*, opposite to God and goodness; swayed by sensual appetites, and hurried by violent passions to what is bad: this was the condition of mankind generally when Christ came, and would have so continued; but out of it he came to deliver us; by the merit of his blood, and power of his grace, to free us from the oppressions of all those usurping powers; to recover and restore us into the propriety, possession, and protection of God. *He came to seek and to save that which was lost; to save us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to deliver us out of the power of darkness, and to translate us into his* own *kingdom*, the kingdom *of righteousness, peace, and joy.* So that he hath acquired us to himself; we being now περιποίησις, *an acquist* made by him, as St. Paul calleth us, and λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, as St. Peter speaks, *a people by acquisition* peculiarly appertaining to him: and divers ways we have been acquired to him, as to our Lord.

Rom. viii. 7, 8.
Luke xix. 10.
Matt. x. 6.
Luke i. 71.
Col. i. 18.
Rom. xiv. 17.
Eph. i. 14.
1 Pet. ii. 9.

3. He hath acquired us by free donation from God his Father; for *God hath given him power over all flesh; God hath delivered all things into his hand; God hath subjected all things under his feet.* Peculiarly God hath given unto him those who comply with his gracious invitations and suggestions; his *sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him;* them hath God given him, to govern them with especial favour, and keep them with a particular care; *Whom*, saith he, *thou hast given me, I have kept;* and, *This is the will of the Father that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.*

John xvii. 2. xiii. 3.
Eph. i. 22.
John x. 27.
John xvii. 12, 6. vi. 39.

4. Again, he hath acquired us by just *right* of *conquest*, having subdued those enemies unto whom (partly by their fraud and violence, partly from our own will and consent) we did live enslaved and addicted: them he vanquished, *having spoiled principalities, and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them.* Whence we rightly fall under subjection to him, as accessions to his victory; having formerly belonged to his

Col. ii. 15.

enemies, and having by his mercy been preſerved: he might juſtly have deprived us of liberty and of life; might have utterly deſtroyed us, or have detained us in woful miſery, as dependents upon and partizans with his foes; ourſelves together with them being found in open hoſtility againſt him: but *according to his great mercy he ſaved us;* and did put us into a capacity of a free, comfortable, and happy life under him, *calling us to his kingdom and glory.* We therefore being *ſubacti potentia,* (ſubdued by his power,) become *jure ſubditi,* (in right ſubject to him,) [being *ſervati,* we are made *ſervi*;] being ſaved from death by him, we according to juſtice and reaſon become vaſſals to him, ſo that all our life ſhould be devoted to his ſervice; that (as it is in the hymn *Benedictus*) *being delivered out of the hands of our enemies,* (his enemies, and our enemies alſo, no leſs in truth and effect,) *we ſhould ſerve him without fear.*

Rom. v. 8, 10. Col. i. 21. Eph. i. 6. Tit. iii. 3. 1 Theſſ. ii. 12. Luke i. 74.

5. He hath alſo farther acquired us to himſelf by *purchaſe*; having by a great price bought us, ranſomed us out of ſad captivity, and redeemed us from grievous puniſhment due to us. We, as heinous ſinners and rebels, had forfeited our lives to God's law, and were ſentenced unto a miſerable death; we had loſt our liberty, and were thrown into a grievous priſon, fettered in guilt, lying under wrath, and reſerved to puniſhment unavoidable; we were ſtripped of all goods, all comfort, all hope and remedy: ſuch was the caſe of man, when he procured a redemption, a pardon, a deliverance and reſtitution for us; delivering up himſelf *a ranſom for us all;* undergoing a puniſhment for our ſins, diſcharging our debts, propitiating divine juſtice, acquitting us from all claims and pretences upon us; yea meriting for us a better ſtate than we did ever before ſtand in: thus *he purchaſed his Church with his own blood;* whence, as St. Paul argues, *we are not our own, for we are bought with a price.*[c] In requital for ſuch mercies and favours ſo unexpreſſibly great, we

Rom. xi. 22. iii. 22. Gal. iii. 22. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Rom. viii. 34. Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. i. 18. 1 Cor. vi. 20. vii. 23.

[c] Οὐ γὰρ ἀρχαὶς, καὶ χρὴ, καὶ δαίμοσιν ἔδει, ἀλλὰ τὸ πάντων τούτων τιμιώτερον, τὸ ἑαυτῶν αἷμα κατεθέτο, ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἐξαγόρασῃ. *Chryſ.* Ἀνάλ. 21.

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cannot, either in gratitude or justice, owe less than ourselves to be rendered up wholly to his dominion and disposal; it is our duty therefore to be his subjects and servants; and it was indeed the intent of his doing so much for us, that we should be so: he did all *gratis*, (most freely,) as to any precedent motive beside his own goodness; but he would not do it fruitlessly, as to effect; *To this end*, saith St. Paul, *Christ both died, rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living: He died for all, that they, which henceforth live, should not live to themselves, but unto him which died for them:* and, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Rom. xiv. 9.
2 Cor. v. 15.
Tit. ii. 14.

6. He likewise acquired a lordship over us by desert, and as a reward from God, suitable to his performances of obedience and patience, highly satisfactory and acceptable to God; *For this the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again: He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the death of the cross; therefore also did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name: For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross; and having despised the shame, sat down at the right hand of the glory of God: We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour: He drank of the brook in the way, therefore he hath lifted up his head: Because he poured out his soul unto death; therefore did God divide him a portion with the great, and he did divide the spoil with the strong*, as the Prophet expresseth it.

John x. 17.
Phil. ii. 8.
Heb. xii. 2.
Heb. ii. 9.
Psal. cx. 7.
Isa. liii. 12.

7. We may add, that he hath acquired a good right and title to dominion over us, as our continual most munificent benefactor; by the great benefits he bestoweth on us, by the ample hire and large recompence he pays us. He affords us a sure protection under him, and a liberal maintenance; high privileges, and ample rewards for our service: it is no Egyptian bondage that he would detain us in, requiring hard labour, and yielding no comfort or recompence; but it is a most beneficial and fruitful service. Christ hath promised *to withhold no good thing* from his

Ps. lxxxiv. 11. xxxiv. 9, 10.

ſervants; nothing requiſite for the ſupport or convenience even of this temporal life, (for to them *who ſeek the kingdom of God, and its righteouſneſs, even all theſe things ſhall be added*, or caſt in;) but eſpecially moſt ineſtimable precious recompences he hath promiſed, and will certainly beſtow in ſpiritual and eternal bleſſings; *He will render to every man according to his works; to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life;* ſaith St. Paul: and, *Being freed from ſin*, ſaith he again, *and made ſervants to God, ye have your fruit unto ſanctification, and in the end everlaſting life:* a fruit to ſanctification, that is, all benefits conducing to our ſpiritual welfare here, and hereafter a life in perpetual joy and happineſs. To them who have been diligent in performing their taſks, and improving their talents committed to them now for his intereſt and honour, he will one day ſay, *Well done, good and faithful ſervants, enter into your Maſter's joy:* and, *Bleſſed*, ſaith our good Maſter, *are ye, when men ſhall revile you, and ſpeak all manner of evil againſt you falſely, for my ſake; Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great ſhall your reward be in heaven.* Now he that is at ſuch care and charges for us, who feeds and furniſhes us ſo plentifully, who rewards our ſmall pains, our poor works, our unprofitable ſervices, (ſuch indeed we muſt confeſs all that we can do to be,) with ſo high and bountiful wages, him ſurely moſt juſtly we ſhould eſteem, and moſt willingly call, our good Lord and Maſter.

Matt. vi. 33. Rom. viii. 28. 2 Pet. i. 4. Rom. ii. 6. Rom. vi. 22. Matt. xxv. 21. Rev. xi. 18. Matt. v. 11, 12.

8. Yea farther yet, our Saviour Jeſus is not only our Lord by nature, and by acquiſition in ſo many ways, (by various performances, deſerts, and obligations put on us,) but he is alſo ſo by our own deeds, by moſt free and voluntary, moſt formal and ſolemn, and therefore moſt obligatory, acts of ours. [e] He is our Lord and King by election; we finding ourſelves oppreſſed by cruel tyrants and enemies, groaning under intolerable ſlaveries, loaded with

[e] Καθάπερ ἡμεῖς οἰκετὰς ἀγοράζοντες, αὐτοὺς τοὺς πωλουμένους πρότερον ἐρωτῶμεν εἰ βούλονται ἡμῖν δουλεῦσαι· οὕτω καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ποιεῖ· ἐπειδὰν, &c. ὁ γὰρ κατηναγκασμένη ἡ δεσποτεία αὐτῷ ἐστι, &c. *Chryſ.* Ἀνδρ. 21.

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heavy burdens, plunged into grievous diſtreſſes, tormented with anxious fears, regrets, and ſorrows, had our recourſe unto him, upon his gracious invitation, offering us deliverance, eaſe, and refreſhment, under his moſt equal and gentle government; *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt—Take my yoke upon you;—for my yoke is eaſy, and my burden light:* ſo he was pleaſed to invite us; and ſo we did, or have at leaſt ſeemed and pretended to undergo his yoke, freely ſubmitting to his government: we have vowed perpetual allegiance and fealty to him, as to our lawful Prince; we have promiſed entire ſubjection to his will, and ſincere obedience to his laws; we have engaged, forſaking all things, to follow him; to follow him as our Captain, and to fight reſolutely under his banners, againſt the common enemies of his glory and our ſalvation. We did, *συμφωνῆν*, (as it is in the parable,) *contract* and agree with him upon certain conditions and conſiderations, moſt advantageous to ourſelves, to be his faithful ſervants, and diligently to perform his work: we renounced all other maſters; yea reſigned up all claim to any liberty or power over ourſelves; becoming abſolutely devoted to his will and command: this we did at our baptiſm, in moſt expreſs and ſolemn manner, and in every religious performance we confirm our obligation; when we acknowledge his right over us, and our duty toward him; when we implore his protection, his ſuccour, and his mercy; when we promiſe our humble reſpect and obedience to him: if our daily confeſſions do ſignify any thing; if our vows and proteſtations have any truth or heart in them; if our prayers are ſerious, our praiſes are hearty, our communions have in them any thing of good earneſt and ſincerity; we do by them continually tie faſter the band of this relation and duty toward him; he by our renewed choices, and conſents, and promiſes, and acknowledgments, doth appear to be our Lord. But let thus much ſuffice for explication of this point; or for conſidering upon what grounds Jeſus Chriſt, the only Son of God, is our Lord; now for practical application of the point thereof.

Matt. xi. 28.

2 Tim. ii. 3. iv. 8.

Matt. xx. 2.

Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. 21.

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1. The general influence which this doctrine may and ſhould have upon our practice is very obvious and palpable. If we are truly perſuaded, that Chriſt is our Lord and Maſter, we muſt then ſee ourſelves obliged humbly to ſubmit unto and carefully to obſerve his will; to attend unto, and to obey his law, with all readineſs and diligence; for, *Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I ſay?* is the expoſtulation of our Lord himſelf, implying it to be a vain and abſurd profeſſion, an irrational and illuſive pretence we make, when we avow and invoke him as our Lord, but withal diſclaim his authority in our practice, by ſlothfully neglecting or wilfully diſobeying his commands: *Not every one that ſayeth, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven;* that is, not he that makes loud and eager profeſſions (crying Lord, over and over again) is in God's eſteem a loyal ſubject, or faithful ſervant, or ſhall obtain the rewards aſſigned to ſuch; but he that, although perhaps more ſparing in words and pretences, doeth really his duty, and performs the will of God. *Many*, ſaith our Saviour again, *ſhall in that day* (in that great day of final account and recompence) *ſay unto me, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name prophefied, and in thy name caſt out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* Not only bare profeſſions and acknowledgments are inſufficient, but even the faireſt and moſt plauſible actions done in the name of Chriſt will avail nothing, without real obedience to the law of Chriſt; even then, when ſuch actions are performed, Chriſt doth not know them; that is, doth not eſteem them his ſervants; the working of iniquity rendering them uncapable of that name and privilege. Such perſons do, as St. Paul ſpeaks, *profeſs to know him*, (or acknowledge him as their Lord,) *but with their works they deny him; who are diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate*, (that is, upon trial found bad and falſe;) *they*, as St. Peter ſays, *deny the Lord that bought them. Do ye not know*, ſaith St. Paul, *that to whom*

Luke vi. 46.
Matt. vii. 21.
Matt. vii. 22.
Luke xiii. 25.
Tit. i. 16.
2 Pet. i. 16.
Rom. vi. 16.

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ye yield yourſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye are whom ye obey? and, *Every one,* ſaith our Saviour, *that doeth ſin, is the ſervant of ſin:* and, *By whom,* ſaith St. Peter, *a man is overcome, to him he is made a ſervant, or enſlaved,* (δεδούλωται.) It is not what we ſay, but what we do; not what we would ſeem, but what we indeed are, doth really conſtitute, and truly denominate us ſervants: we not only ſhall loſe the rewards and privileges granted to the ſervants of Chriſt, but we do even forfeit all claim to the very name, if we diſobey his commands, being indeed properly ſervants to thoſe luſts which ſway us; to that devil, whoſe pleaſure we fulfil; to that world, whoſe bad manners we follow: we do but invade and uſurp the name of Chriſtians, if our practice is not conformed to the precepts of our Lord [c].

John viii. 34.

2 Pet. ii. 19. Πάντες καὶ δοῦλοι, καὶ ζωστοῖς προσηγορία. *Mar. Lagd. Eyſch.* v. 2.

2. Indeed the conſideration of this point doth clearly demonſtrate to us the great heinouſneſs of ſin; how many follies, iniquities, baſeneſſes, and ingratitudes lie complicated therein: the madneſs of oppoſing irreſiſtible power, and diſſenting from infallible wiſdom: the unworthineſs of offending and abuſing immenſe goodneſs; the injuſtice and diſloyalty which are couched in the diſobedience of him, who by ſo many titles, and upon ſo many obligations, is our Lord; the abuſiveneſs of evacuating all his laborious and expenſive deſigns in acquiring us; the levity and giddineſs of diſavowing him by our practice, whom we ſo often have acknowledged our Lord, and vowed entire ſubjection unto.

3. Again, if Chriſt be our Lord, then are we not our own lords, or our own men; we are not at liberty, or at our own diſpoſal, as to our perſons or our actions: thoſe rules of the civil law, *that a ſervant can poſſeſs nothing of his own, that no profit can ſimply accrue to him,* but all in reſult muſt go to his lord; that he is reckoned nobody

Ὁ δοῦλος ὁ μόνον διοικούμενος δοῦλός ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ὅλος δοῦλος. *Ariſt. Pol.* i. 2.

[c] Mendacium eſt Chriſtianum ſe dicere, et opera Chriſti non facere. *Ambr.* It is a lie, to call one's ſelf a Chriſtian, and not to do the works of Chriſt, as St. Ambroſe ſaith. Omnino nihil prodeſt nomen ſanctum habere ſine moribus; quia vita a profeſſione diſcordans abrogat illuſtris tituli honorem per indignorum actuum vilitatem. *Salv. de Gub. Dei,* iii. *ſub fin.*

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in law, and the like, do moſt perfectly agree to us in regard to Chriſt, who is upon ſo many accounts abſolutely our Lord, infinitely more than one man can be to another. We conſequently muſt not think to have our own wills, we muſt not attend our own buſineſs, we muſt not pleaſe our own appetites, or gratify our own deſires, or enjoy our own pleaſures, or follow our own fancies, or regard our own profits, or ſeek our own honour; we muſt not undertake or proſecute any thing merely our own, or farther than doing ſo is ſubordinate unto or conſiſtent with the ſervice, intereſt, and glory of our Lord: otherwiſe we do conſtitute ourſelves the lords and maſters, in effect renouncing and caſting off him: if he be truly our Lord, it is his will and word that ſhould be the rule of all our actions; which we ſhould diligently attend unto, which we ſhould readily obſerve: it is his buſineſs, that we ſhould with eſpecial care mind, and moſt earneſtly proſecute; it is his advantage and credit, that we ſhould propound unto ourſelves, as the main aims of all our endeavours. Whatever we deſign or undertake of moment, we ſhould do it with this formal conſideration and reference; doing it as the ſervants of Chriſt, from conſcience of our duty to him, with intention therein to ſerve him, with expectation of reward only from him; according to thoſe apoſtolical precepts; *Whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we ſhould do all to the glory of our Lord:* we muſt *glorify him with our bodies and our ſpirits, which are his:* we muſt *not live to ourſelves, but to him that died, and roſe again for us:* ſince *whether we live or die,* (that is, whatever action we ſet upon relating either to life or death,) *we are the Lord's;* we ſhould direct all to his honour, profit, and ſervice.

Τῷ θέλειν ἐν-τὸ ζῆν μὴ ἐθέλεται. *Ariſt. Pol.* vi. 2.

1 Cor. x. 31.

1 Cor. vi. 20.

2 Cor. v. 15.

4. If Chriſt be our Lord, (abſolutely and entirely ſuch,) then can we have no other lords whatever, in oppoſition to him, or in competition with him; or otherwiſe any way than in ſubordination and ſubſerviency to him; *No man,* as he doth himſelf tell us, *can ſerve two lords;* that is, two lords having collateral or equal authority; their injunctions will interfere, oppoſe, or ſupplant one the other;

Matt. vi. 24.

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our affections will incline to one more than to the other; at leaſt we ſhall be detained in hovering ſuſpenſe; our leiſure, our care, our endeavour being employed in the ſervice or attendance of one, will force us to neglect and diſappoint the other; *Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon;* ſerving wealth (that is, eagerly affecting it, and earneſtly purſuing it) is inconſiſtent with our duty to Chriſt; the like may be ſaid of honour, of pleaſure, of curioſity, of any worldly thing; for, *He that will be a friend of the world, is thereby*, ſaith St. James, *conſtituted an enemy of God;* and if he thereby be made an enemy, he ſurely can be no good ſervant; a ſervant being (as the Philoſopher calls him) *humilis amicus, a meaner ſort of friend;* who performeth ſervice out of good-will and affection; like St. Paul, who diſcharged that high and laborious ſervice, of preaching the Goſpel, incumbent on him, and of that kindly neceſſity which he expreſſes, ſaying, *The love of Chriſt conſtrains me;* or as St. Peter enjoins thoſe particular ſervants of Chriſt (employed by him in teaching and guiding his people) to do their duty, μὴ ἀναγκαστῶς, ἀλλ' ἑκουσίως, *not by conſtraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;* or as St. Paul chargeth all ſervants, μετ' εὐνοίας δουλεύειν, *to ſerve with good-will, as to the Lord, and not to men.* It is indeed the proper nature and the neceſſary condition of this ſervice, that we decline, forſake, renounce, deteſt all other obligations, all affections, all encumbrances, which may avert us from a cloſe adherence thereto. *Whoever*, ſaith he, *he be of you, that forſaketh not* (or, who renounceth not, who biddeth not farewell to, ὃς οὐκ ἀποτάσσεται) *all that he hath, cannot be my diſciple*, or my follower and ſervant: *If any man cometh after me, and do not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and ſiſters, yea and his own life, he cannot be my diſciple;* he cannot indeed truly and heartily be ſo, who in love and obſervance of Chriſt will not readily forſake and loſe all.

James iv. 4. καθίσταται.

2 Cor. v. 14. ix. 17. 1 Pet. v. 2.

Eph. vi. 7.

Luke xiv. 33.

Luke xiv. 26.

5. Particularly therefore, if Chriſt be our Lord, we are thereby diſobliged, yea we are indeed prohibited, from pleaſing or humouring men, ſo as to obey any command,

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to comply with any desire, or to follow any custom of theirs, which is repugnant to the will or precept of Christ: *If*, saith St. Paul, *I did yet please men*, (that is, humour, soothe, or flatter them, so the word ἀρέσκειν doth import,) *I were not the servant of Christ*; that is, I were not such in effect, I did in so doing not behave myself as a servant of Christ; as it becomes such an one, and as such an one is obliged to do. And, *Ye*, saith he again, *are bought with a price, be not the servants of men*, (or, *ye are not the servants of man*, so the words will bear rendering;) that is, ye therefore do not, or ye therefore ought not, to perform service to men, absolutely as such, or with ultimate relation unto them; but when ye lawfully and allowably do it, ye do it out of conscience, and regard to Christ, as his servants. We may indeed, yea in duty we must, obey men humbly and willingly, diligently and faithfully, in our stations, and according to our conditions, as we are placed and called in this world, either as subjects or servants; but we must do this in subordination to our principal and supreme Lord; in obedience to his command, and with regard to his service; so we are taught by St. Paul; *Servants*, saith he, *obey your masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling*, (that is, very respectfully and carefully,) *in singleness of heart, as to Christ; not in eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ; doing the will of God from the soul; serving with good-will, as to the Lord, and not unto men*: and, *Be subject*, saith St. Peter, *to every human constitution*, διὰ τὸν Κύριον, *for the Lord*; (that is, out of conscientious regard or affection to the Lord; because he is our Lord;) *as free, and not having your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God*: yea, *Whatsoever* (saith that wise instructor, St. Paul, again) *ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive back the recompence of inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

Gal. i. 10.

1 Cor. vii. 23.

Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7.

1 Pet. ii. 13, 16.

Col. iii. 23, 24.

6. It is, we see, (which may be another improvement of this consideration) not only an engagement, but an encouragement to the performance of all duty; particularly to the performance of those hard duties, (so contrary to

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natural will and ſtomach,) cheerful obedience and ſubmiſſion to men; who often, as St. Peter intimates, are
1 Pet. ii. 18. σκολιοὶ, *crooked*, or untoward, and harſh in their dealings with their ſervants; to whom yet upon this conſideration he enjoins us willingly to yield obeiſance, no leſs than to *the good and gentle;* for that in this and all other performances of duty we do ſerve a moſt equal and kind Maſter, who will graciouſly accept our ſervice, and abundantly requite it; a Lord, that will not ſuffer his ſervants to want any needful ſuſtenance, any fit encouragement, any juſt protection or aſſiſtance; who will not only faithfully pay them their promiſed allowance, but will advance them to the higheſt preferment imaginable. No man ever had rea-
Mal. iii. 14. ſon to complain with them in the Prophet; *It is vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances?* No; the Devil himſelf, with envy and regret obſerving the benefits and bleſſings which the pious man enjoyed in regard to his faithful ſervice, could not but ſay;
Job i. 9, 10. *Doth Job ſerve God for nought? haſt thou not made a hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land.* No wonder, argued the detracting ſpirit, and little thank or praiſe is due to a ſervant, whoſe ſervice is ſo bountifully rewarded. Indeed our Lord is not only juſt and faithful, ſo as to render
1 Cor. iii. 8. unto every man ἴδιον μισθὸν κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον, *a proper reward anſwerable to his proper pains;* but he is exceedingly, beyond expreſſion, liberal in beſtowing on his ſervants retributions infinitely ſurpaſſing the deſert and worth of all their labours: for their ſmall, weak, faint, imperfect, and tranſitory endeavours, (by all which he is indeed really nothing the richer, or the greater,) he returneth bleſſings in nature, in degree, in duration, immenſely great, precious, and glorious. He fails not here to feed them with food convenient, to clothe them decently, to ſupply all their needs, to comfort them in all diſtreſſes, to keep them in all ſafety, to deliver them from all evil; he afterwards conferreth on them a kingdom, an incorruptible and unfading crown; a ſtate of perfect joy and endleſs glory.

7. It is a great comfort alſo for a Chriſtian (how mean and low ſoever in his worldly condition) to conſider the dignity and excellency of this his relation; how great and how good a Lord he ſerveth; that the greateſt princes are his fellow ſubjects; (for, *He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords: All kings ſhall fall down before him; all nations ſhall ſerve him.*) Yea, that the higheſt angels are his fellow ſervants; (as the angel in the Reve-lation told St. John.) That although his Lord be ſo high in power and glory above all, yet he is ſo gracious, as not to neglect or deſpiſe him; but condeſcendeth to regard the loweſt of his ſervants with equal care and favour as the higheſt; *He accepteth not the perſons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they all are the work of his hands*, ſaid good Elihu; and they all, we might add, are the price of his blood.

Rev. xix. 16. Pſal. lxxii. 11. Rev. xxii. 9. Eph. i. 20. Luke i. 48. Job xxxiv. 19.

8. And as it is a comfort to the meaneſt, ſo it is no ſhame or diſparagement for the greateſt of men to ſerve ſuch a Lord; it is a relation in itſelf more worthy and honourable than the higheſt dignity or preferment in the world: to wear a crown, how rich ſoever; to command the whole earth; to poſſeſs all the land, and all the gold under heaven, are beggarly, trivial, and ſordid things in compariſon thereto; a ſervant of Chriſt (the apoſtolical ſtyle) is a ſtyle far more glorious than all thoſe windy titles, which the greateſt monarchs aſſume to themſelves; having ſuch a place in God's peculiar regard and care doth exceed all privileges and advantages, all glories and dignities, which any perſon is capable of: well therefore did St. Paul, in reſpect to *the excellency of the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt his Lord*, eſteem all ſuch things (all worldly privileges and benefits) *as loſs and as dung*, as things detrimental and deſpicable; wiſely did the holy Apoſtles forſake all things, (all their deareſt relations, all their ſweeteſt enjoyments, all their ſecular occupations,) to follow ſuch a Lord. (*Behold*, ſaith St. Peter, *we have let go all things, and have followed thee.*) Moſt juſt and reaſonable are thoſe ſentences pronounced againſt thoſe

Phil. iii. 8. Luke xviii. 28.

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Luke ix. 26.

Luke xix. 27.

9. St. Paul also maketh use of this consideration, to press upon superiors their duties toward their inferiors; their duties of equity, meekness, kindness, mercy, pity, and all humanity; *Masters*, saith he, *yield unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven:* and, *Ye masters*, saith he again, *do the same things to them*, (perform the like good offices, shew the same good-will to your servants,) *forbearing menaces; knowing that your Master also is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.* Thus in Leviticus God commandeth his people not *to rule over their servants with rigour*, assigning this reason, *For they are my servants*, &c. And we know how our Saviour, as he doth commend and bless those wise and honest servants, who, being appointed over his household, (that is, being placed in any superior rank or charge,) do behave themselves justly and kindly to their fellow-servants, *dispensing to them their food in due season;* so upon those who injuriously or rudely do beat or abuse their fellow-servants; who are harsh, rigorous, or unmerciful in exactions of debt, or in any other dealings toward them, he denounceth severe chastisement. *A servant of the Lord* (that is, one employed by Christ in any office or charge) *must not fight, but must be gentle unto all*, saith St. Paul; such indeed should be the humility and goodness of Christians one toward another, that the greatest of them should stoop to the meanest offices and expressions of good-will to their

Col. iv. 1.

Eph. vi. 9.

Lev. xxv. 42, 43, 55.

Matt. xxiv. 45, 49. xviii. 28, &c.

2 Tim. ii. 24.

brethren; *He*, saith our Lord, *that will be great among you, let him be your minister; and he that will be first of you, let him be your servant.* SERM. XXII. Matt. x. 44.

10. The consideration indeed of Christ being our Lord, is in general an inducement to charity, to all sorts of charity. *We must*, saith St. Paul, *walk worthy of our calling, with all lowliness of mind, and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of spirit in the bond of peace;* because *we are members of* the same *body, whereof Christ is the head*, and fellow-servants of the *same Lord*. It is an endearing and obliging relation; it becometh us and concerneth us, being so of one family, to be courteous and gentle, kind and helpful one to another; to maintain peace, quiet, and love one with another; it is a just duty and respect to our common Master, who loveth order and peace, who hateth confusion and dissension in his house; who is himself full of charity toward every one of his, and therefore hath enjoined it as the especial duty, hath declared it to be the most distinctive character of his servants and followers; *Hereby*, saith he, *shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* Eph. iv. 2, 5. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. John xiii. 15.

11. Particularly this consideration doth oblige us to exercise that piece of charity and of justice which consists in forbearing rash and harsh censure; which practice is not only very uncharitable and unjust toward our brethren, but it is also a wrongful and arrogant encroachment upon our Lord himself, unto whom only the right of decision in such cases doth appertain; unto whose infallible and impartial judgment both they and we are obnoxious; *Who art thou*, saith St. Paul, *that judgest another's servant?* (or domestic; ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην:) *to his own master he standeth or falleth*: and, *Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother?* and, *We shall all be presented before the judgment-seat of Christ: There is*, saith St. James, *one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another?* It is, we see, an invading our Lord's right and Rom. xiv. 4, 10. Jam. iv. 12.

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authority, without moſt evident and reaſonable cauſe, to cenſure or condemn our fellow-ſervants.

12. The conſideration of this point our Saviour doth alſo improve, as an engagement to imitate himſelf in the practice of all virtue and piety; eſpecially in the practice of charity, humility, and patience. It is proper for a ſervant to follow and attend upon his maſter in all places and in all performances; to compoſe himſelf in behaviour to the manners and example, to conform himſelf to the garb and condition of his Lord: is it not abſurd and unſeemly, that the ſervant ſhould be more ſtately, or more delicate than his maſter; that he ſhould ſlight thoſe whom his maſter vouchſafes to reſpect; that he ſhould refuſe to undertake thoſe employments, ſhould ſcorn to undergo thoſe hardſhips, which his maſter doth willingly condeſcend unto? To ſuch purpoſe our Saviour diſcourſeth; impreſſing by this argument on his diſciples the duties of humility, charity, and patience, by him exemplified for that very end; *Ye call me*, ſaith he, *Maſter, and Lord;* *and ye ſay well, for ſo I am: if I then, your Lord and Maſter, have waſhed your feet, ye ought alſo to waſh one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do as I have done to you.* And having directed his diſciples to the patient enduring of reproaches, affronts, and injuries put upon them, he enforces his precept by ſubjoining, *The diſciple is not above his maſter, nor the ſervant above his lord: it is enough for the diſciple to be as his maſter, and the ſervant as his lord;* that is, the ſervant in all reaſon ought to be very well content, if he find ſuch uſage as his lord hath willingly and patiently undergone. And he thus again impreſſes theſe duties on them; *He that is greateſt among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth ſerve: for whether is greater, he that ſitteth at meat, or he that ſerveth? but I am among you as he that ſerveth.* Yea, St. John raiſeth this conſideration ſo high, that he ſaith thus; *Becauſe he laid down his life for us, we alſo ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

John xiii. 13, 14, 15.

Matt. x. 24. Luke vi. 40. John xv. 20.

Luke xxii. 26. Matt. xx. 25.

Ἐν. 1 John iii. 16.

13. Finally, for our ſatisfaction and encouragement, we

may confider, that the fervice of Chrift is rather indeed a great freedom than a fervice; it is a reducement into a moft defirable eftate, wherein we fully enjoy that wherein liberty is defined to confift, ἐξουσίαν αὐτοπραγίας, *power of doing whatever* (as reafonable and wife men) *we pleafe* ourfelves to do; wherein all things are lawful to us, excepting only fuch things as are unprofitable to us, or hurtful. What Ariftotle made the character of a juft prince, (whofe government doth nowife prejudice true liberty,) that he doth not in his government chiefly aim at his own profit, but his fubjects' good, is perfectly true of our Lord: he is indeed capable to receive no private benefit to himfelf, befide fatisfaction in our welfare; all his laws and commands, all his adminiftrations and proceedings, are purely directed to our advantage. Even the ftatutes which God gave to Ifrael by Mofes are faid to have been *commanded for their good,* not for any good that could accrue to God from their obfervance: much more are the laws of Chrift purely fuch; conducing to the health, the fafety, the peace, the comfort, the joy, the happinefs both of our bodies and fouls; of the prefent temporal life here, and of our immortal ftate hereafter; *His religion is profitable unto all things, having promife of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* Well therefore might St. James call the law of Chrift *a perfect law of liberty;* well might our Saviour fay, *If the Son fet you free, then are ye free indeed.* What the Stoics vaunted of themfelves, the Chriftian modeftly and truly may fay, that he is the only free man; it is this philofophy only, to which thofe words of Seneca may truly be applied; [f] *You muft ferve philofophy, that you may attain true liberty:* for, if to be above the reach of all confiderable evil or mifchief; if to be fafe from all enemies, and fecure from all impreffions of fortune; if to have no reafon much to fear, or much to grieve for any thing; if not to

Quæ eft vera libertas? innocentia. *Epiß.*

Deut. x. 13. vi. 24. Neh. ix. 13.

1 Tim. iv. 8.

James i. 25.

John viii. 36.

[f] Philofophiæ fervias oportet, ut tibi contingat vera libertas. *Sen. Ep.* 8. et 88.

Non homines timere, non fortunam; nec turpia velle, nec immodica; in fe ipfum habere maximam poteftatem, &c. *Sen. Ep.* 75.

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desire things base, or things immoderate; if to have an especial command over one's self, is (as those philosophers define it) properly liberty; then is he most free that serves our Lord. If to be rescued from the servitude of disorderly passions and base vices is the greatest freedom, then the good Christian chiefly doth enjoy it. [s] *A good man*, saith St. Austin, *although he serve, is free; a bad man, although he reign, is a slave; not of one man, but, which is more grievous, of so many lords, as of vices.* Such indeed is the benignity of our Lord, that he treats his
John xv. 14. faithful servants rather as friends, than as servants; *Ye are*, saith he, *my friends, if ye do whatever I command you; I call you no more servants.* Yea he bears to them the affection of a brother, and affords them the honour to
John xx. 17. i. 12. be so styled; *Go*, saith he, after his resurrection, to Mary Magdalene, *to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; to my God, and to your*
1 John iii. 1. *God:* and, Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην, *See ye what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God.*

Full of so many practical uses is this excellent point; the which I leave to be farther deduced by your meditation.

1 Thess. v. 23. Now, *The God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;* to whom be glory and praise for ever. *Amen.*

[s] Bonus etiamsi serviat, liber est; malus etiamsi regnet, servus est; nec unius hominis, sed quod gravius est tot dominorum, quot vitiorum. *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, iv. 112.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

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THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD.

MATT. i. 20.

For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου.

WITHOUT any preface, or circumſtance of ſpeech, we obſerve three particulars couched in theſe words. 1. The incarnation of Jeſus our Lord, implied by the word τὸ γεννηθὲν, *that which is conceived*, or generated. 2. The principal efficient cauſe of this incarnation; the Holy Ghoſt; by whoſe immediate operation, without any active influence of man, he was generated, *is of the Holy Ghoſt*. 3. The concurrence of the bleſſed Virgin Mary, as the ſubject of that divine virtue and operation; he was *conceived in her*. Upon each of theſe particulars, being all of them conſiderable points of that faith which we daily profeſs, (and eſpecially proper ſubjects of our meditation at this time,) I ſhall reflect, obſerving ſomewhat profitable for our edification both in way of right knowledge, and in tendency to practice.

I. Our Saviour Jeſus was conceived and born; that is, the only Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer, the ſame who *was from the beginning*, and did, as St. John in the entrance of his Goſpel teacheth us, from all eternity *exiſt with God*, the eternal *Word of God, by whom all things were made*, was *in the fulneſs of time* conceived and born; that is, had a production agreeable to the nature of man, John i. 1, &c. 1 John i. 1.

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becoming thereby truly and really a man; which wonderful myſtery is in Scripture by various phraſes expreſſed and implied; by the Word being incarnated, that is, *being made*, or becoming, *fleſh; God being manifeſted in the fleſh; The Son of God being ſent in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh; partaking of fleſh and blood;* his *taking the form of a ſervant, being made in the likeneſs of men, being found in faſhion as a man, aſſuming the ſeed of Abraham*; his *deſcending from heaven, coming forth from the Father, being ſent, and coming into the world; The day-ſpring from on high viſiting us, eternal life being manifeſted;* the reſult of what is ſignified by theſe and the like expreſſions, that, The bleſſed and glorious perſon, who before from all eternity did ſubſiſt *in the form* or nature *of God*, being the Son of God, one in nature with his Father, (the expreſs image, or exact character of his ſubſtance,) did by a temporal generation truly become man, aſſuming human nature into the unity of his Perſon; by a real conjunction and union thereof to the divine nature, in a manner incomprehenſible and ineffable. He did, I ſay, truly become man, *like unto us* in all things, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *ſin only excepted*; conſiſting, as ſuch, of all the eſſential ingredients of our nature; endued with all our properties and faculties, ſubject to all paſſions, all infirmities, all needs, adherent or incident to our nature and condition here.

John i. 14. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Rom. viii. 3. Heb. ii. 14, 16. Phil. ii. 7, 8. John iii. 13, 31. vi. 38, 46, 50, 51, 58. iii. 17. x. 36. xvii. 18. 1 John iv. 9, 8, 9. Gal. iv. John xvi. 27, 28. Luke i. 78. 1 John i. 2. Phil. ii. 7, 8. John x. 30. xiv. 9. 1 John v. 7. Col. i. 15. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Heb. i. 3. ii. 17. iv. 15.

He was not only (as the Gnoſticks and ſome other heretics have conceited) in ſhape and outward appearance, (as a ſpectre, deluding men's ſight and fancy,) but in moſt real truth, a very perfect man; having a real body, figured and circumſcribed as ours, compacted of fleſh and blood, viſible and tangible; which was nouriſhed and did grow, which needed and received ſuſtenance, which was tender and ſenſible, frail and paſſible; **which was bruiſed with ſtripes, torn with ſcourges, pricked with thorns, pierced with nails, transfixed with a ſpear; which was mortal, and underwent death by expiring its breath, and being disjoined from the ſoul that enlivened it. He had alſo a ſoul, endued with the ſame faculties as ours; with an underſtanding, capable of learning**

Vid. Athan. in tract. cont. Apollinar. Phil. ii. 8. Ἐν σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος. Rom. viii. 3.

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and improvement; (for he was, as man, ignorant of ſome things which he might know; and *he grew*, it is ſaid, *in wiſdom and in ſtature:*) with a will, ſubject and ſubmiſſive to the divine will; (for, *Let this cup*, ſaid he, *if it be poſſible, paſs from me: but however let not my will, but thy will be done:* and, *I ſeek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath ſent me:*) with ſeveral appetites, of meat, of drink, of ſleep and reſt; (for we read that he was hungry, that he thirſted, that he was weary:) yea with various paſſions and affections, (φυσικὰ καὶ ἀδιάβλητα πάθη, I mean, that is, natural and irreprehenſible paſſions;) and theſe of the moſt troubleſome and afflictive ſort, ſuch as zeal, pity, ſorrow; the which were ſometime declared by very pathetical ſignifications, and are expreſſed in high terms; as upon occaſion of his friend Lazarus's death it is ſaid, *He groaned in ſpirit and was troubled;* he then, and upon other occaſions, out of pity and ſorrow, did *weep*; and ye know what exceſſes of ſorrow, what anxieties and agonies, what tribulations, diſturbances, and amazements the Evangeliſts, uſing thoſe very terms, deſcribe him to have undergone at his paſſion; ſo that, as the Apoſtle to the Hebrews ſpeaketh, **We have not an high prieſt that could not compaſſionate* (or ſympathize with) *our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted* (or exerciſed and proved) *as we are, yet without ſin.*

Mark xiii. 32. Luke ii. 52. Matt. xxvi. 39. Luke xxii. 42. John v. 30. Matt. xxi. 18. John iv. 6, 7. Matt. xvi. 23. John ii. 17. Mark iii. 5. John xi. 33, 5. Περίλυπος. Matt. xxvi. 38. Ἀδημονῶν. Matt. xxvi. 37. Ἀγωνία. Luke xxii. 44. Τετάρακται. John xii. 27. Ἐνεβριμήσατο. Mark xiv. 33. Πιεσμοῖς. Luke xxii. 28. * Heb. iv. 15.

So it appeareth, that the Son of God (co-eternal and co-eſſential with his Father) became the Son of man; truly and entirely partaking of the nature and ſubſtance of man, deficient in no eſſential part, devoid of no property belonging to us; exempt from no imperfection or inconvenience conſequent upon our nature, except only ſin; the which is not a natural ſo much as a moral evil; did not ariſe from man's original nature, but proceedeth from his abuſed will; doth rather corrupt than conſtitute a man.

Now concerning this great diſpenſation ſeveral inquiries and conſiderations may be made, concerning the manner of it, how therein God did aſſume our nature; or how therein God and man ſubſiſt united; concerning the reason of it, whence it proceeded, and why it was deſigned; con-

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owning the use and influence of it, which it should have upon our practice.

1. As for the first point, the manner of this mystery, we may well, in discretion and modesty, answer with the Schoolman; *It is not in man to define what manner of communication this is, whereby the human nature is communicated to the Word*; we cannot indeed otherwise than by negation determine, not otherwise than by comparison explain it. No words perhaps, which we do use to signify our conceptions about these material and inferior things, will perfectly and adequately suit to a mystery so much remote from the common objects of our knowledge, so far transcending our capacity; to affirm positively, that this wonderful incarnation did come to pass, that this incomprehensible and ineffable union doth persist in this or that manner, may be rash and dangerous; it would cease to be admirable, if we could fully conceive or express it: but this justly and safely we may assert, that whatever manner of conception or expression about it doth plainly derogate from the divine perfections, or is irreconcileably repugnant to the nature of things, or disagreeth with the tenor of revealed truths evidently connected unto or depending on this mystery; or which (either directly and immediately, or obliquely and by manifest consequence) doth contradict the language and doctrine of the holy Scriptures, is to be rejected by us: whence we may for exclusion of errors and mistakes about this point, with the holy Fathers, and particularly with the great council of Chalcedon, assert, that in the incarnation of our Lord the two natures, divine and human, were united ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως.

Quomodo fit hæc communicatio, qua natura humana communicatur verbo, non est hominis definire. *Aquin.*

Syn. Chalc. Act. v. (fin.) (pag. 340.)

2. The natures were, I say, united ἀσυγχύτως, that is, without any confusion or commixtion; for such a way of blending would induce a third nature different from both, such as resulteth from the composition and contemperation of the elements into a mixed body; such a commixtion being supposed, our Lord would be neither God nor man, but another third kind of substance, such as must not without any ground or authority be supposed; that would destroy,

minish, or alter the properties of each; which is unfound ſay, and impoſſible to be; for the divine nature is not capable of any diminution or alteration: wherefore both natures in this myſtery do ſubſiſt entire, diſtinct, and unconfused, each retaining its eſſential and natural properties.

2. The incarnation was performed ἀτρέπτως, that is, without converſion or tranſmutation of one nature into another: the divinity could not be turned into humanity; for how could God, (the eternal, ſelf-ſubſiſtent, moſt ſimple, and immutable Jehovah,) as ſuch, be anywiſe changed or made, become infirm and paſſible, conſiſt of body and ſoul, ſuffer and die? Nor could the humanity be turned into divinity; for how could that which did not ſubſiſt at all before the incarnation be therein converted into another thing? why ſhould our Saviour ever be called man, when his humanity was by tranſlation into divinity deſtroyed? why is it ſaid, *the Word was made fleſh*, if the flesh was changed into the Word? to omit, how impoſſible it is, that one ſubſtance ſhould be tranſmuted into another, eſpecially a corporeal into a ſpiritual, a finite into an infinite; to omit likewiſe the many dangerous conſequences of this poſition, and its inconſiſtency with many principal and plain doctrines of our religion, particularly the real paſſion and death of our Lord, which could not be incident to him otherwiſe than as retaining the true nature of man.

3. The natures were alſo joined ἀδιαιρέτως, undividedly; that is, ſo as they have not diſtinct ſubſiſtences, or do not conſtitute two perſons: for there is but one Chriſt, one Perſon, to whom, being God, and being man, are truly and properly attributed.

4. We muſt alſo underſtand the natures to be united ἀχωρίστως, inſeparably; ſo that they never are ſevered, the union is never diſſolved; the ſame perſon never ceaſing to be both God and man; not even then, when our Lord, as man, did undergo death; for he raiſed himſelf from the dead, he reared the temple of his own body, being fallen: as being God, he was able to raiſe himſelf; as being man, he was capable to be raiſed by himſelf; the union be-

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tween God and man persisting, when the union between human body and soul was dissolved.

We might add, in farther exclusion of erroneous conceits, that this mysterious union was not made κατὰ παράστασιν, *by assistance*, or close presence only, nor κατ' ἐνοίκησιν, merely *by inhabitation*, nor κατὰ σχέσιν, *by relation*, nor κατ' ἀξίαν, *by estimation*, nor καθ' ἁρμονίαν, *by conformity*, in will and practice, nor κατὰ ταυτοβουλίαν, *by consent*; as Nestorius and other heterodox dogmatists anciently, in opposition to the catholic exposition of this mystery, did imagine: but it doth not seem worth the while to discuss those antiquated conceits, or with more subtilty to intrigue the point.

Salmeron. apud Gerard. in loc. Exeget. p. 441. Bel.

As for illustration of it by comparison, I shall only (passing over divers more wide and improper resemblances; such as those of Bellarmine, the union of a man's arm to his body, the incision of a bough into a tree, and the like) observe, that nature doth afford us one similitude very apposite for explication of this mysterious union; which is the union of a man's soul and body, whereby he becometh one person. The soul and body are two substances, very different in kind, in properties, in dignity: the one of itself material, extended, divisible, passive and corruptible, lifeless and senseless; the other immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible, self-moving, endued with life, knowledge, passion: both of them are also capable of separate existence, or of subsistence by themselves; yet are these two, although in a manner difficult for us to conceive or comprehend, closely united together, and do concur to the making up a man; and that so as to remain still in substance distinct, each retaining its natural properties, without any confusion, or any conversion of one into the other; so also that from them the same man receiveth the denominations of corporeal and spiritual, of mortal and immortal: in a like manner (although in a degree more admirable and incomprehensible) are the divine and human natures conjoined in our Lord; for, as we hear in the Athanasian Creed, *As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.* So much for the manner.

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2. As for the reason why the Son of God did assume our nature; the chiefest and clearest reason thereof was, God's design thereby to exercise and demonstrate his immense goodness, mercy, and pity toward us; *So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: In this the love of God was manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him: Through the tender mercy of our God, the day-spring from on high did visit us:* it was χρηστότης καὶ φιλανθρωπία, the *benignity and philanthropy of God*, which induced him to engage his Son upon such a debasement and exinanition of himself, that we thereby might be raised to a capacity of salvation.

John iii. 16. 1 John iv. 9. Rom. v. 8. viii. 32. Διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ. Luke i. 78. Tit. iii. 4.

God's choice is reason enough.

If we farther desire to contemplate the wisdom of God in this admirable proceeding, and to know why God, among other means and methods alike (for all we can know) possible to him, did choose in this way to transact our redemption; it may be answered, that it becometh us rather to adore the depth of God's wisdom herein, than to sound it, or to hope by searching to reach the bottom of it: yet some congruities of this method to the reason and exigency of things are in the Scripture intimated to us, and in some manner are discernible by us, sufficient to recommend the divine wisdom therein to our admiration; reasons may be assigned why our Redeemer should be θεάνθρωπος, why God, why man.[f] It well became God to stoop down thus, that, as his goodness toward us was infinite, so the demonstrations thereof, to his glory and our benefit, should be answerably such; which perhaps could not otherwise be, than by such a condescension: as a prince could not make any other so great attestation of favour to his vassal, as by descending from his throne, laying aside his majesty, putting himself into a like condition, conversing freely with him, subjecting himself to the same laws and duties, enduring the like hardships and inconveniences with him.

Eph. i. 6. Εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ.

It was expedient that our Redeemer should be God, Ἔνδειξις δικαιοσύνης,

[f] Nisi enim esset verus Deus, non adferret remedium; nisi esset homo verus, non præberet exemplum. *Leo M. de Nat.* Serm. i.

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that he might be able by his power to save us; to remove those huge obstacles that crossed our salvation, to subdue those potent enemies which opposed it; to command and conquer nature, to vanquish the powers of hell, to abolish death in our behalf.

It was requisite that he should be the co-essential natural Son of God, that by the nearness of his relation to God, by the supereminent dignity of his person, by the immense value of his merit, he might conciliate God's favour to us, fully appease his wrath incensed against us, and satisfy his justice abused by our offences.

It was convenient, that his doctrine should carry with it the highest certainty and strongest efficacy; that his example should challenge the greatest regard and strictest imitation; that his laws should have supreme authority, and with greatest advantage oblige us: fit therefore it was, that he should be God, and have the character of divinity stamped upon what he said and performed.

The redemption and salvation of man did impose an honour too august for any creature to be dignified with; it was a work too difficult and mighty for any but God to achieve; it was not proper that any creature should be principal in managing an affair of such height and importance: needful and expedient therefore it was, that our Saviour should be God.

It was also requisite, upon many accounts, that he should be man: that by perfectly obeying God's commands, and submitting patiently to God's will, as man, he might procure God's favour toward man; that as man had deeply wronged and offended God, so man also should highly content and please him; in St. Paul's language, that *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners*, (that is, were condemned and exposed to death, upon God's just displeasure for that one man's transgression, backed with the like in his posterity,) *so by the obedience of one man many should be made righteous*, (that is, all who would imitate his obedience should be absolved from guilt, exempted from punishment, and received into grace; God being well pleased with and re-

Rom. v. 19, &c.

onciled to mankind, especially to his followers, in regard o that man's dutiful observance of his will. s) Decent it was, that as man did approve, so man also should *condemn sin in the flesh;* that as man by wilful self-pleasing did incur misery, so by voluntary suffering he should recover happiness; Ἔπρεπε, * *It did,* as the Apostle saith, *become him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering.*

Rom. viii. 3. That he might taste death for man. Heb. ii. 9. Col. i. 22. * Heb. ii. 10.

It was also fit, that he who was designed to intercede for our welfare, to propitiate for our faults, to succour and relieve our distresses, should be tender of our good, and sensible of our needs; that he therefore should by nature and experience be disposed συμπαθεῖν, to *compassionate our infirmities,* and μετριοπαθεῖν, to be *gently affected toward us,* in respect of our ignorances and errors; whence ὤφειλε, he, saith the divine Apostle again, according to the design appointed to him, and undertaken by him, ought, or *it did behove him to be in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God; that he might propitiate for the sins of the people; for in that he hath himself suffered being tempted, he is also able to succour those that are tempted.*

As the Devil did overbear man—Evæ advocata. *Iren.* Heb. iv. 15. v. 2. Heb. ii. 17. Ἀνθρώπων φίλος σώσας ἐκ ἰσχύος· Θεὸς γενόμενος παθεῖν ἐκ ἠδύνατο. *Procl. in Conc. Eph.* pag. 5.

He was to be man also, for that by appearing in human shape, visible and audible, familiar and agreeable to us, he was qualified for that great design of declaring God's will and intentions toward us in a more easy, less amazing, and more obliging way, than otherwise could have been: for that hence likewise he could, with more advantage, describe an exact copy of righteousness for us to transcribe; shewing us exemplarily how as men we should behave ourselves; how we should moderate our sensual appetites, how govern our passions, how order and employ all the powers of our soul and members of our body; how pass through all conditions, and entertain all events

s He by his humanity did unite mankind in fraternity.

Τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ καταργήσας. Eph. ii. 15.

Ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὀστέων αὐτοῦ. Eph. v. 30.

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befalling us; it not being indeed otherwise possible, that so lively and suitable a pattern of transcendant charity, meekness, humility, and patience, could have been exhibited to us.

Acts xvii. 31. x. 42.

Fit it also was, that he who was to be appointed our judge, substitute of the supreme Judge invisible, should be, as God, (of perfect wisdom, and so able to discern all matters of fact, to distinguish all points of right; of perfect rectitude, so as never willingly to discost from truth and equity,) so also man; visible and audible to us, without surprising astonishment and terror; apt to screen us from the insupportable presence of God; endued with a natural tenderness of good-will and compassion toward us, disposed to temper needful severity with competent mildness.

Ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι. Eph. i. 10. καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξαι. Col. i. 20. 1 Tim. ii. 5.

In fine, it was most congruous, that he who was designed to *recapitulate and reconcile*, as St. Paul speaketh, *all things in heaven and earth*, to be the great *mediator* and *peacemaker* between God and man, for the repairing God's honour and dispensing his grace, for the *purchasing our peace* and procuring our salvation, that he should be most nearly allied unto both parties; that consequently, if possible, (and what is to God, the author of this economy, impossible?) he should be both God and man; Son to God, and brother to us; the same in nature with God, in kind with us. Such reason and wisdom is discernible in this dispensation.

III. Now for the practical use of this doctrine, (for it is not a doctrine merely speculative, and barren of fruit, or practical use:) it should, first, have a powerful influence upon our minds, causing us, with high degrees of love and gratitude, to adore the infinite goodness of that God, who hath been pleased himself to stoop so low, that he might advance us from the lowest depth of meanness and wretchedness, to the highest pitch of honour and happiness that we are capable of: what words can express, what thought can apprehend a favour so unconceivable and ineffable? Well

Eph. iii. 19.

might St. Paul call it ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην, *love transcending all knowledge:* well may heaven admire, and earth be astonished, and hell tremble at the disclosure

of ſuch a myſtery, at the accompliſhing ſuch a miracle of grace and mercy; that the ſovereign Majeſty of heaven, the eternal Lord of glory, the world's great Maker, the only Son of God, and heir of all things, ſhould become a poor, ſmall, weak, and frail man; ſhould dwell in a tabernacle of fleſh; ſhould converſe with ſilly, wretched, and frail mortals here; ſhould be expoſed to want, diſgrace, and pain: ὦ βάθος, O depth of goodneſs and mercy unſearchable! if this will not, what conſideration can raiſe us, what benefit can affect us? what prodigious ingratitude will it be, to be regardleſs or inſenſible of kindneſs ſo wonderful? SERM. XXIII.

2. Another great uſe of this point is to engage us, as univerſally to all obedience, ſo particularly to the duties of humility, of patience, and of charity. Did the Son of God thus willingly ſubmit, and ſo abaſe himſelf; and ſhall we then be refractory, ſhall we exalt ourſelves; ſhall we refuſe any appointment, or repine at any proceeding of God? Did he from the higheſt pitch of glory ſuper-celeſtial voluntarily deſcend into this gloomy region and ſtate of ignoble obſcurity; did he, abandoning immenſe wealth, freely embrace extreme poverty; did he gladly ſequeſter himſelf from thoſe ineffable joys above, to converſe with ſorrow and ſadneſs here, in this valley of tears, for God's ſake, and ours; and ſhall we be unwilling to do any thing for God's ſake, or to part with any thing for him? To theſe purpoſes doth St. Paul apply the conſideration of this point; *Let*, ſaith he, *the ſame mind* (the ſame humble, patient, meek, charitable mind) *be in you, which was in Chriſt Jeſus; who being in the form of God—emptied himſelf, taking upon him the form of a ſervant; being made in the likeneſs of men, and being found in faſhion as a man, humbled himſelf, becoming obedient unto death:* it was the greateſt argument and inſtance of humility, patience, and charity, that could be, for him, that did exiſt in the form of God, thus to debaſe himſelf, to partake of our nature, and ſubmit to our ſtate: and, *Know*, ſaith that Apoſtle again, *the grace* (or graciouſneſs) *of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that being himſelf rich, for your ſake he became poor,*

Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

Vid. 1 John iv. 10, 11. 2 Cor. viii. 9.

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poor, (being rich as God, and Lord of all things, he put himself into this mean and poor condition of man,) *that ye, through his poverty, might be rich:* it was a consideration surely most proper to his purpose of inciting unto charity [h].

3. The consideration of this point should raise our minds to a sense of the dignity of our nature, accompanied with dispositions of heart and deportments of life answerable thereto: by our Lord's incarnation our nature is so advanced, that we become nearly allied to God, of the blood-royal of heaven, in this respect overtopping all the creation of God; so that hereby, as the Apostle to the Hebrews discourseth, that of the Psalmist was verified, concerning man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thine hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:* the angels themselves cannot boast of such an honour; for *he took not the nature of angels, but he took the seed of Abraham:* being therefore so highly dignified, we should have a mind suitably great and noble, loving, delighting in, aiming at the most excellent things, void of base cares, of sordid desires, of unworthy designs; we should, in all our conversation, demean ourselves worthily and decently, like the brethren of Jesus and children of God [i]; that we may not disparage and disgrace this illustrious alliance. As our Lord did vouchsafe, in most condescensive grace, to resemble us, so should we, with a generous and honest ambition, aspire to resemble him; as he stooped to humanity, so let us rear ourselves to a kind of divinity, in purity of mind and sanctity of life; so St. Gregory Nazianzen exhorteth; [k] *Let us*, saith he, *be as Christ, since Christ is become like us: let us, for his sake, be gods, seeing he is become man for us.*

Psal. viii. 5. Heb. ii. 7, 8.

Heb. ii. 16. i. 5.

Phil. ii. 15. Matt. v. 48. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

Vid. Leonem, P. de Nat. Serm. vi.

[h] Ἐορτάζομεν ἐπιδημίαν Θεοῦ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους, ἵνα πρὸς Θεὸν ἐκδημήσωμεν, ἢ ἐπανέλθωμεν. *Naz. Orat.* 38.

[i] Agnosce, Christiane, dignitatem tuam, et divinæ consors factus naturæ, noli in veterem vilitatem degeneri conversatione recidere. *Leo de Nat.* Serm. i.

[k] Γινώμεθα ὡς Χριστὸς, ἐπεὶ καὶ Χριστὸς ὡς ἡμεῖς. Γινώμεθα θεοὶ δι' αὐτὸν, ἐπειδὴ κἀκεῖνος δι' ἡμᾶς ἄνθρωπος. *Greg. Naz. Orat.* 41.

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4. The confideration of this point fhould fill our hearts with fpiritual comfort and joy; there never can be a greater occafion or jufter caufe of rejoicing than this, that our Lord is born and come: it is fignally *Evangelium, good tidings;* never news more welcome hath come into the world; never report more grateful was heard by moral ears: it is news from heaven, and the beft that ever came thence; *Behold,* (faid the angel that brought it, and a meffage it was moft worthy the mouth of an angel,) *I tell good tidings of great joy, which fhall be to all people;* news, at which all heaven was pleafed and ravifhed with joy, breaking prefently forth into hymns of praife and congratulation; *There was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hoft, praifing God, and faying, Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, and good-will to men.* In this, if we mark it, all the grand caufes of extraordinary joy and feftivity do confpire.

Luke ii. 10. Εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην.

Luke ii. 13.

Is the birth of a prince ever by honeft fubjects entertained and celebrated with joy? Behold a Prince born to all the world; a Prince that cometh to rule mankind with perfect equity and clemency; to bring with him all peace and profperity; to achieve the moft noble exploits that could be undertaken in our behalf, to protect us in moft affured fafety, to defend us from all evil, to fubdue and deftroy all the enemies of our welfare, to refcue us from the greateft flaveries and miferies, to fettle us in perfect happinefs; he bringeth *falvation from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us; fo that being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might ferve him without fear, in holinefs and righteoufnefs before him all the days of our lives.*

Luke i. 71, 74.

Is victory glorious and joyful? See the invincible warrior is iffued forth into the field, *conquering and to conquer;* he that fhall quell, difarm, and rifle *the ftrong one,* that fhall rout all the forces of hell, that fhall defeat fin, and flay death itfelf, that fhall fubdue the world, and fubject all things to himfelf: the *Captain of our falvation* appeareth, triumphing in humility; the great blow is given; the Devil's pride and envy are abafed; all the

Rev. vi. 2. Luke xi. 22. John xvi. 33.

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enemies are amazed, are daunted, are confounded at his presence; they cannot ſtand, they break, they ſcatter, they flee before him.

Is the publiſhing of peace acceptable? Behold eternal peace between heaven and earth, a general peace among men, a peace of conſcience between man and himſelf, is now eſtabliſhed and proclaimed: the illuſtrious ambaſſador, the noble hoſtage, the infallible pledge thereof is arrived; *Preaching peace to them that are far off, and to them that are near.*

Eph. ii. 17. Acts x. 36.

Is recovery of liberty comfortable unto ſlaves and captives? Behold the Redeemer is come, the great ranſom is laid down ſufficient to purchaſe the freedom of whole worlds: innocence appearing in human nature hath unlocked the priſon of ſin, in which we were cloſely detained; hath broken the ſhackles of univerſal guilt, which ſorely pinched mankind: he is come, who is anointed to preach (αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν) *diſmiſſion to the captives.*

Gal. iii. 22. Luke iv. 18.

Is the coming of a good friend to be congratulated? Behold, the beſt friend to all mankind (bringing with him moſt wholeſome advice, moſt needful ſuccour, moſt ſeaſonable conſolation) is arrived to viſit us, and dwell with us.

Is it a comfortable thing to be graced with honour? What greater honour could mankind be dignified with, than this of receiving the Son of God into its kind and kindred? What could more advance and adorn us, than this high relation?

Is mirth ſeaſonable to the day of marriage? Behold heaven and earth this day are coupled, divinity is eſpouſed to humanity, an eternal indiſſoluble knot of amity, of unity, is tied between God and man; the great Bridegroom is come forth clad in his nuptial garment of fleſh, ready to wed the Church, his beloved ſpouſe[1].

Is the ſun's riſing (after a long, dark, and cold night) cheerful and comfortable? See, the *Sun of righteouſneſs is*

[1] In natali Domini quaſi in nuptiis ſpiritualibus ſponſæ ſuæ eccleſiæ Chriſtus adjunctus eſt, tunc proceſſit ſponſus de thalamo ſuo, hoc eſt verbum Dei de utero virginali. *Aug. de Temp.* Serm. ii.

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risen, with healing in his wings; dispensing all about his most pleasant light, and salutary influences; *The day-spring from on high hath visited us,* diffusing an universal light upon the souls of men, dispelling the night of ignorance and error, *shining out to those that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and guiding our feet in the way of peace: Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,* &c. Never did heaven with so clear and serene a countenance smile upon earth, as it did this day, when this super-illustrious luminary (this *bright morning star,* as he is called in the Apocalypse) did spring up above our horizon. From this auspicious day commenced the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were exiled from Paradise, condemned to death, exposed to hell; the reinstating us in a condition of hope, in a capacity of happiness; the return of life and joy into this region of corruption and disconsolateness: this is the day, which *all nations desired,* and earnestly longed for, (with an implicit sense;) which the good Patriarchs foreseeing did rejoice; which the Prophets in so magnificent strains did predict and presignify. In our Lord's nativity all mankind was in a manner born, or did revive; was restored from a manifold necessity of dying; from lying dead in the guilt, and under the power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed into that *second death* of endless misery. It is in effect therefore the world's nativity that we celebrate, annexed to that of our Lord; the beginning of the new, better, spiritual, and eternal life to men: all reason therefore we have upon this consideration heartily to rejoice; how extremely stupid and senseless are we, if the apprehension of goods so many, so excellent, hence accruing to us, doth not inspire our hearts with a grateful cheerfulness! *This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.*

Luke i. 78, 79.

Isa. lx. 1.

Rev. xxii. 16. Ἀστὴρ λαμπρὸς καὶ ἑωθινός.

Ps. cxviii 24.

Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary.

SERMON XXIV.

THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD.

MATT. i. 20.

Τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν. *For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.*

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IF every circumstance of our Lord's wonderful incarnation deserveth to be considered, as affording matter of good instruction, and serving to excite devout affection; then surely the principal causes and ingredients thereof may demand a special regard from us; such are those which are couched in this text; the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, by which it was accomplished; the concurrence of the blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject, in whom the divine virtue did work it: upon which two particulars we shall reflect, in order.

I. It was the *Holy Ghost*, by the singular virtue and operation of whom, without intervention of any man, or earthly father, the blessed Virgin became impregnated and did conceive. Joseph was, ὡς ἐνομίζετο, in outward esteem, the Father of our Saviour, (for, *Is not this*, said they, *the carpenter's son? Is not this the son of Joseph?*) the modesty of his holy mother being preserved from misprision

Luke iii. 23. Matt. xiii. 55. John vi. 42. Luke iv. 22. Mark vi. 3.

under the ſhroud of wedlock, during the time that by God's order the myſtery and truth of things was to be concealed from general notice, *until the day of his being ſhewed* and *manifeſted to Iſrael*; but God only was in truth his Father, his incarnation being performed by the miraculous efficacy of God's Holy Spirit; upon which account (beſide his eternal generation) he was alſo the Son of God; for, *Therefore*, ſaid the angel to his mother, *that holy thing which ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the Son of God.*

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Luke i. 80. John i. 31.

Luke i. 35.

The matter of fact was well known to Joſeph by revelation, and to the bleſſed Virgin herſelf by her conſcience alſo; and by them it was atteſted to the holy Apoſtles; their atteſtation being ſeconded by the miracles of our Lord, together with all the potent arguments which confirm his doctrine: nor do we find, that even the adverſaries of our Lord did ever offer to impeach his parents of impoſture, or did anywiſe trouble them about this report coming from them. And it is ſo clearly and fully affirmed in the Goſpels, that it is prodigiouſly ſtrange that here have been lately ſome (called Joſephites) who have queſtioned it, upon weak pretences of diſcourſe; whom we cannot otherwiſe conſider, than as intolerably audacious perverters of Scripture, or ſubverters of its authority and uſe; for ſurely nothing there can be deemed certain, if this point is not. The fact therefore we muſt take for granted; and, for our farther inſtruction about it, we ſhall conſider three particulars; the *manner* of it, the *reaſons* for it, the *practical uſe* whereto it may be applied.

Apud Epiſcopium—

1. The manner of that operation, whereby the Holy Ghoſt did effect the human generation of our Lord, is by the archangel Gabriel expreſſed to be from *the ſupervention of the Holy Ghoſt, and the divine power overſhadowing the bleſſed Virgin;* the which words being of ſo general interpretation, and as to preciſe meaning ſo little intelligible by us, may well ſerve to bound our curioſity, and to check farther inquiry. Some indeed (as the followers of Valentinus and Apollinarius, of old; as Menno, Servetus, and others, of late) have been ſo bold, as to de-

Luke i. 35. δύναμις ὑψίστου.

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termine, that the Holy Ghoſt did bring from heaven a body, which he did convey into the bleſſed Virgin; or that our Saviour's fleſh was formed of a divine ſeed, from the ſubſtance of God himſelf; or that in his conception the Holy Ghoſt did create and impart ſomewhat of matter; but it is enough to ſay, that theſe are raſh and groundleſs conceits; the holy Fathers, having weighed and diſcuſſed ſuch imaginations, to prevent dangerous or miſbecoming thoughts and ſpeeches, about a point of ſo ſacred nature, more ſoberly do teach, that our Saviour was conceived by the Holy Spirit, not σπερματικῶς, *ſeminally;* but δημιουργικῶς, *operatively;* οὐ διὰ συνουσίας, *not by copulation;* but διὰ δυνάμεως, *by power;* not *de ſubſtantia Spiritus Sancti, of the ſubſtance of the Holy Ghoſt;* but *de potentia, by the virtue of it;* and farther than this, ſay they, *Generationem ejus quis enarrabit? Who can declare his generation,* or exactly deſcribe the manner of a performance ſo very wonderful and ſublime; to the which no experience doth furniſh any event like or comparable? When therefore it is ſaid, that the conception, or generation, was ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου, *of the Holy Ghoſt,* the prepoſition ἐκ is to be taken for the ſame with ὑπὸ, or διὰ, (as it is very commonly uſed,) denoting, not matter out of which, but efficiency by which the effect was derived. But,

Damaſc. iii. 2. Juſt. Mart. Apol. 2. Aug. de Temp. Serm. vi. P. Leo de Nat. Serm.

2. Why was our Saviour conceived by the Holy Ghoſt? Divers reaſons for it may be aſſigned.

1. It was needful for aſſuring the divinity of our Saviour, or his being the eternal Son of God. That the Meſſias, the Redeemer of the world, ſhould be the Son of God, was neceſſary, according to the purpoſe of God, the ancient predictions, the general opinions and expectations of God's people, (often implied in the Goſpels;) accordingly ſuch he was as the co-eternal Word in his divine nature; but it was requiſite that he ſhould alſo be ſuch according to his human nature; that by his extraordinary generation, as man, his other more ſublime generation (ſo much tranſcending human conceit) might be more credible, and the world might be convinced of his divinity; for men hardly would have been capable to believe him more than

Pſal. ii. 7, 12. 1 Chron. xxii. 10. 2 Sam. vii. 13. Pſ. lxxx. 27. John i. 34, 49. xi. 27. vi. 69. Matt. xvi. 16.

Mark xiv. 61. xxvi. 63. Matt. viii. 29. Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 34.

a man, whom they ſaw born in the common way of men: *Is not this the ſon of Joſeph?* was an argument which they urged againſt him, when he ſpake about his *deſcent from heaven*, John vi. 42. and cauſed them to admire, when they obſerved the power of his miracles (Matt. xiii. 55.) and the wiſdom of his diſcourſe, (Luke iv. 22.) but eaſily might they be induced to admit a myſtery, which was countenanced by ſo grand a miracle, as the birth of a child, by the divine power, without a father.

2. This was the moſt fit way of accompliſhing that ſo neceſſary conjunction of the divine and human nature: a work of ſuch grandeur and glory, of ſuch grace and goodneſs, was not to be achieved by any other agent than by him, who is the ſubſtantial virtue and love of God; by whom we ſee all extraordinary and moſt eminent works to have been managed, to whom commonly the μεγαλεῖα Θεοῦ, the majeſtic and magnificent things of God are aſcribed; for in the creation of the world, it was *the Spirit of God* which moved upon the waters, forming things, and impregnating them with all kinds of life and vigour natural; he it is, to whom thoſe ſignal works of Providence, the revelation of divine truth, the prediction of future events, the performance of miracles, the renovation of men's minds, and reformation of their manners, in a peculiar manner are attributed; ſo likewiſe to him this incomparably ſupernatural, glorious, and important act was moſt properly due. Acts ii. 11.

3. It being neceſſary that our Saviour ſhould be conſecrated to his great functions, and perfectly ſanctified in his perſon, as man; and thoſe performances (according to the myſtical economy of things among the divine Perſons) being appropriated to the Holy Ghoſt, the natural ſpring of all derived ſanctity; his efficacy muſt needs intervene to this purpoſe: if Jeremiah, St. John Baptiſt, and St. Paul, (perſons deſigned for offices and employments in dignity, in conſequence ſo far inferior,) were ſanctified, and ſeparated by the Holy Ghoſt from their mother's womb; in how more excellent kind and degree was it requiſite, Jer. i. 5. Luke i. 15. Gal. i. 15.

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that he should be sanctified thereby, who was sent into the world to redeem and purify it from all filth and fault? According to that saying of our Lord, *Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?* whereas the style of Gods was given to persons devoted to far meaner services.

John x. 36.

Futurum hominum salvatorem tale ortus decebat, qui et in se haberet humanæ substantiæ naturam, et humanæ carnis inquinamenta nesciret. *Leo* i. *de Nativ.* Ser. 2.

4. It was needful, that the human nature, which God did vouchsafe so highly to advance, by assuming it to a personal conjunction and union with himself, should be clear from all stain and pollution; such as in ordinary propagation doth adhere to our *sinful flesh* and corrupt nature; that he whom God even as man would so dearly love, and so entirely be pleased with, should be void of the least inclination to iniquity or impurity; for, as the Psalmist telleth us, *God is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him;* he is *of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot* so much as *look upon iniquity;* how then would he receive any defiled thing into so near an union, into so dear a regard, into so full a complacence? He therefore was to be thoroughly sanctified; and thence it was needful that his humanity should issue from the fountain of holiness, God's most holy Spirit.

Rom. viii. 3. Psal. v. 4. Hab. i. 13.

5. It in like manner was necessary, that he who was ordained to appease God's displeasure, and fully to reconcile him toward us, to expiate all our offences, thoroughly to redeem mankind from the guilt and from the power of sin; who with absolute authority was to teach, to exemplify, to command all righteousness, should himself *know no sin: Such an High Priest,* as the Apostle saith, *become us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; who had no need first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins:* the sacrifice expiatory for our offences was to be *a lamb without blemish and without spot:* whence he was to be fully sanctified; and to become τὸ ἅγιον, *that holy thing,* (absolutely,) as he was termed by the celestial messenger: whence from the source of sanctity, the Holy Ghost,

2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. vi. 26, 27. 1 Pet. i. 19. Luke i. 35.

whoſe proper name doth import holineſs, whoſe proper work it is to ſanctify, he was to derive a perfect ſanctity and purity in his ſacred conception.

6. We may add, as an obſervable point, the analogy, or appoſite reſemblance thereof, between the conception of our Saviour for us, and his *formation in us;* his natural generation and the ſpiritual regeneration of Chriſtians; his becoming our brother in the fleſh, and our being made his brethren in the Spirit; both being effected by the ſame agent: as Chriſt was made true man, and partaker of our nature, ſo we become true Chriſtians, *and conſorts of the divine nature,* by the operation of the ſame divine Spirit: as he by the diſpenſation of God, ſo we by his grace *are born, not by blood, nor by the will of fleſh, nor by the will of man, but of God;* hence doth accrue a new relation, and we become his brethren, not only as he was made like to us, but alſo as we become like to him; and are *begotten of God,* by the ſame heavenly virtue, the ſame *incorruptible ſeed.*

Gal. iv. 19.

θείας φύσεως κοινωνοί. 2 Pet. i. 4.

Eph. i. 10. John i. 13.

1 Pet. i. 23. 1 John iii. 9.

It may indeed be an admonition to us, to labour after this ſpiritual conception, which will render us conformable to our Lord, and far more truly allied to him, than even his partaking our nature hath done; and indeed without that ſpiritual one, this carnal alliance will not ſignify any thing of benefit to us; it will little profit us, that he was born in the fleſh, if we are not *born of the Spirit;* without which generation *we cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

2 Cor. v. 16.

John iii. 3, 5.

3. The proper application of this point is to engage us on a thankful adoration of the divine goodneſs and wiſdom; ſo fully, ſo fitly carrying on that infinitely gracious work of our redemption; all the divine Perſons of the bleſſed Trinity in a particular manner conſpiring, as in the deſignation, ſo in the execution thereof; the Father mercifully deſtinating and ſending his Son; the Son willingly and gladly condeſcending to come; the Holy Ghoſt effectually bringing him into the world; to which bleſſed Trinity therefore we ſhould render all humble reverence

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and hearty praiſe: and ſo much for the firſt particular obſerved in the text.

II. The next is, the concurrence of the bleſſed Virgin Mary to our Lord's generation; *that which is conceived* (or generated) *in her.*

τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν

The being generated (τὸ γεννᾶσθαι, here) we may ſuppoſe to reſpect or to expreſs his whole human generation, with the parts and progreſs thereof; implying on the Virgin's part all that ſhe as a mother did confer thereto; wherein therefore are comprehended the following particulars;

1. His conception of her ſubſtance, whence he is called *the fruit of her womb;* and *a rod* (that is, a branch, or twig) *ſprouting from the ſtem of Jeſſe;* and, *Behold,* ſaid the angel, *thou ſhalt conceive in thy womb.*

Luke i. 42. Iſa. xi. 1. συλλήψῃ ἐν γαστρί. Luke i. 31.

2. The nutrition, accretion, and entire conformation of his body, out of her blood and ſubſtance; whence her womb is ſaid to bear him, (*Bleſſed is the womb that bare thee,*) to have been *gravidated,* or great with child; the which as it grew did ſwell her womb viſibly; ſo that *ſhe was found,* or obſerved, by apparent ſigns, *to be with child of him,* or to have him in her womb.

Luke xi. 27. ἔγνων. Luke ii. 5. Matt. i. 18. εὑρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα.

3. His nativity itſelf, or excluſion into the open world; which is thus expreſſed by the Evangeliſt; *The days were accompliſhed that ſhe ſhould be delivered, and ſhe brought forth her firſtborn ſon.*

Luke ii. 6, 7.

Whatever therefore any mother doth confer to the entire production of a child, is to be attributed to the bleſſed Virgin; whence ſhe was truly and properly *the mother of our Lord,* and is accordingly often ſo called in the Goſpels; whence alſo ſhe hath been in the Church defined to be and commonly ſtyled θεοτόκος, the bearer and mother of God; that is, of him who is God; that term aſſerting the divinity of Chriſt and the unity of his perſon, [againſt Neſtorius and his partizans; who ſaid, that the Virgin was not properly θεοτόκος, but χριστοτόκος; and that he who was born, was not God, but ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος, *a man carrying God,* or divinity, in him.]

Luke i. 43. Neſt. ad Cyrill. in Conc. Eph. Cyrill. Epiſt. ad Neſt.

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Now for our instruction and use we may resolve the word *her* into three respects distinctly considerable; he was born of her, a Woman; he was born of her, a Virgin; he was born of her, Mary; each of which respects is pregnant with matter observable: he was born of a Woman, that was highly needful to be; of a Virgin, that was very requisite; of Mary, that doth involve divers circumstances of importance.

1. Our Saviour was born of a woman.

The Valentinian heretics of old did opine, that he was only born through a woman, or did merely pass through her, as liquor doth pass through a vessel; but that is a great error; for he was born in her, and of her; in our text it is ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν, *generated in her;* which in sound expresseth no more, than her containing him when conceived, but according to the force of the Hebrew particle ב (*be*) answering to ἐν here, is apt to signify more; and must be taken to do so in conformity to parallel expressions; as that of St. Paul, *God sent forth his Son born* ἐκ γυναικὸς, *of a woman;* and that of St. Luke (in the best copies, followed by our English translators) τὸ γεννώμενον ἐκ σου, *The holy thing that is born of thee, or out of thee.* Gal. iv. 4. Luke i. 35.

Indeed of a woman he was born, that is, from the matter and substance of a woman: so as thereby to bear the relation of a kinsman to us, becoming consanguineous to all mankind, which *God did make of one blood;* whence *he is not ashamed to call us brethren,* [and alloweth us to be *of his flesh and of his bones.*] Acts xvii. 26. Heb. ii. 11—14. Eph. v. 30.

We may easily conceive, that God could immediately have created a nature in kind and properties like to ours, and have assumed it; but that would not have so fitly served the design of reconciling himself to us, and redeeming us; to the effecting that in the most congruous way, not only a resemblance in nature, but a cognation and proximity in blood was needful, or at least was very convenient and suitable: for our blood being tainted, our whole stock having forfeited its dignity and estate by the rebellious disloyalty of our common ancestors, it was expedient that it should be purged and restored by the satis-

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factory merit and acceptable fidelity of one, who was of our race and kindred. We being to be adopted and received into God's family, it was proper that business should be transacted by intervention of a common relation; according to the discourse of St. Paul, *God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law,* (that according to the obligation undertaken by him, he performing the obedience required by the law, might redeem those who, being tied to obey the law, had yet transgressed it,) *ἵνα τὴν υἱοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν, that* (it followeth) *we might receive the adoption;* that is, that we by virtue and in consequence of that birth from a woman, and of that obedience to the law performed by our brother, might be in capacity to receive the quality or state of sons to God.

Gal. iv. 4, 5.

It was likewise seemly, that the devil, who by the weakness of a woman had seduced man from his duty to God, had overthrown, triumphed over, and captivated God's creature, in just amends, for the reparation of God's honour, and our consolation, should by the strength and faithful constancy of one, proceeding from a woman, be himself defeated and debased; according to the mystical intent of that most ancient prophecy, or promise, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head;* of the woman, the man is not mentioned; for,

2. Our Lord was born of a virgin: so it was anciently prefignified and predicted; *a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; a virgin; Almah, ἀνέκφυρος,* (so Aquila, with respect to the derivation of the word, did render it,) that is, *a recluse;* one who perhaps had seldom seen, who *never had known a man.*

Isa. vii. 14. עלמה

This, it seemeth, was that *new thing* (that most strange and admirable thing) which God in the prophet Jeremiah did foreshew, that he *would create in the earth,* and which should then happen, when he would restore Zion, and establish a new covenant with his people; namely, a *woman shall compass a man;* a woman in a manner extraordinary, without the concourse of a male, should conceive, and enclose in her womb a man; that very man, who

Jer. xxxi. 22.

ſhould accompliſh the great matters there predicted and promiſed. So it was, and ſo upon divers accounts it was requiſite that it ſhould be.

For how otherwiſe apparently, to the ſenſe and ſatisfaction of all men, could he be that which (according to ancient prophecies and common expectation, as alſo according to the exigency of things, and the tenor of divine purpoſes) he ought to be, both the Son of God and the Son of Man, otherwiſe than by coming of a virgin? He muſt be born of a woman, that he might truly be the Son of man; he muſt be born of a virgin, that he might be clearly the Son of God; how otherwiſe could there be an effectual conviction of his divine original?

It was alſo decent and expedient, that the tabernacle in which God ſhould reſide and dwell, ſhould be proper and enclofed; that the temple of the divinity ſhould be holy and ſeparate; that the ſoil, whence holineſs itſelf would ſprout forth, ſhould be clear and pure from all ſordid mixtures; that none ſhould preſume to touch the border of that holy *mountain, where God ſo ſpecially would manifeſt himſelf; that the luſt of man ſhould not approach that place, whence the glory of God would ſo illuſtriouſly ſhine forth.

Ἔστι γὰρ τὸν ἐπὶ ἀφθαρσίᾳ τοῦ παντὸς ἐν τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ βίῳ γενόμενον, ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπηρετούσης αὐτοῦ τῇ γενέσει τῆς ἀφθαρσίας δεξασθαι. *Greg. Nyſſ. in Chriſti Nat.* (tom. ii. p. 776.)

*Exod. xix. 11.

It was alſo moſt convenient for exciting due attention and regard, for begetting faith, for procuring reverence and admiration in men, that our Redeemer ſhould enter on the world in a manner ſo peculiar and miraculous: for who that heareth of ſuch an event, can forbear to mind it, and ponder on it? who can doubt him to be the Son of God, whom by ſufficient and certain atteſtation he learneth to have been conceived without any concurrence of man? who will not readily defer high veneration to him, who appeareth in a manner ſo glorious and ſupernatural?

3. Moreover, our Saviour was born of Mary; of that ſingular perſon determined and deſcribed in the Goſpels; of her that was eſpouſed to and did live with Joſeph; with Joſeph the carpenter; who was born in the town of Bethlehem, who lived in the city of Nazareth in

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Ἐξ οἴκου καὶ συγγενείας Δαβίδ.

Luke ii. 4. i. 27.

Galilee; who both according to natural and legal extraction was descended in a direct lineage from King David, being, as St. Luke saith, *of the house and family of David*, and who by consequence did lineally come from Abraham. She herself was also of the same stock and family; as may be collected from circumstances intimated in the story, and certainly may be deduced from the prophecies concerning our Saviour's stock, with the assertions implying their accomplishment.

Of *Mary* therefore, by blood and progeny a princess, extracted from the most illustrious stem on earth; not only famous among men, but (which is infinitely more) especially dear to God; who yet in external condition was very mean and poor, living obscurely in habitation with an artisan, of a painful and not gainful trade.

Luke i. 48.

As for her personal qualifications, they were excellently worthy; for in disposition of mind she was very religious and devout toward God; in the temper of her spirit, very sweet and calm, very modest, meek, and humble; such the passages occurring in the Gospels concerning her do shew her to have been; such particularly that most excellent hymn ejaculated by her (wherein we may discover a spirit ravished with the most sprightly devotion imaginable; a devotion full of ardent love, of humble thankfulness, of hearty joy, tempered with most submissive reverence) demonstrateth her to have been.

Of a mother so related, and so qualified, our Saviour was born; both which points were requisite.

Gen. xxvi. 4. xii. 3. xviii. 18. xxii. 18. Gal. iii. 8. Acts iii. 25. ii. 15. Isa. xi. 1. 10. Rom. i. 3. xv. 2. Ps. cxxxii. 17. Rev. v. 5. xxii. 16. Amos ix. 11.

She was so related, for the declaration of God's truth, fidelity, and constancy, in accomplishing those ancient predictions and promises made to the Fathers; to Abraham, that *in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed;* to David, that *of the fruit of his loins God would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne;* concerning whom, as by many passages in the Gospel it appeareth, God's people had a general expectation and persuasion, that he should be *the rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch growing out of his roots; in whom the horn of David should bud;* who *should raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen, and*

rule over the kingdom of Jacob for ever: and that our Lord ſhould be born at Bethlehem, that he ſhould be called a Nazarene, were circumſtances touched in the Prophets, for the verification whereof it was needful that the mother of our Lord ſhould be thus related.

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Acts xv. 16. Luke i. 39. Jer. xxxiii. 15. xxiii. 5, Matt. ii. 9. 15, 21, 23.

She was alſo to be ſo duly qualified, as to her ſtate and mind; being homely in ſtate of life, and holy in diſpoſition of mind; to ſignify, that God did not ſo much regard the outward pomps and appearances of this vain world, as the inward frame and temper of ſpirit.

It is indeed no ſmall diſparagement to thoſe empty glories, which men are wont ſo hugely to admire, and it may be a ſtrong inducement to a moderate eſteem of them, if we conſider it, that God did not choose for the mother of his Son, and Saviour of mankind, a viſibly great princeſs, or any to appearance honourable, ſplendid, or wealthy perſonage; but her that was eſpouſed to a mechanic artificer, her that was only rich in grace, and decked with interior endowments; *adorned* (after the garb which St. Peter recommendeth to women) *with the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible purity of a meek and quiet ſpirit, which in the ſight of God is of great price.* This is the reflection which ſhe herſelf did make upon the matter; for this *her ſoul did magnify God, becauſe he had regarded the low eſtate of his handmaiden;—he had ſhewed ſtrength with his arm, he had ſcattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts; he had put down the mighty from their ſeat, and had exalted the humble and meek; he had filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he had ſent empty away.* This ſheweth the extreme folly of contemning the poor, to whom commonly God expreſſeth ſo ſpecial regard, who are capable of ſo high favours, who have ſo glorious conſorts of their ſtate.

1 Pet. iii. 4.

Luke i. 51.

Such a perſon did the Son of God choose to bear himſelf, to bear duty unto, to confer that ſpecial favour and eminent honour upon; an honour, among all exterior honours the higheſt that ever was vouchſafed to any of human kind, or indeed to any mere creature.

I ſay of exterior honours; for ſpiritual advantages our

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Lord himſelf doth teach us in our eſteem to prefer above this great privilege; they being *toto genere*, ſuperior, and placing us in a nobler relation to him than this; *Whoſoever*, ſaith he, *ſhall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, the ſame is my brother, and ſiſter, and mother;* the ſame in a more excellent manner and ſublime degree is allied, is endeared to me, than he can be upon the ſcore of any carnal kindred: the conformity to him in our mind and affections doth render us nearer to him than any cognation of blood; the having him formed in our hearts is more conſiderable, than the bearing of him in the womb.

Mat. xii. 50.

Indeed, the mother of our Lord herſelf, although as ſuch ſhe was κεχαριτωμένη, *eſpecially favoured and graced*, and *bleſſed among women*; although upon that account *all nations muſt* eſteem and *call her bleſſed;* although worthily ſhe did in that reſpect acknowledge, that *God had done* μεγαλεῖα, *magnificent and mighty things for her;* yet really, in juſt eſteem, to have Chriſt born in her ſoul, to have participated of his divine grace and preſence in her heart, the Holy Ghoſt's having produced a ſpiritual birth of holy diſpoſitions in her, was a nobler honour and a truer happineſs than that; *neither would it*, as St. Chryſoſtom ſaith, *have been anywiſe profitable to her, if ſhe had not been virtuous, to bear Chriſt in her womb, or to bring forth that admirable birth;* this our Saviour plainly declared, whenas a good woman, tranſported by the raviſhing excellency of his diſcourſe, did cry out, * *Bleſſed is the womb that bare thee*, he thence took occaſion to ſay, *Yea rather, bleſſed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.*

Luke i. 28, 48, 49.

Οὐδὲ τὸ κυοφορῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν, καὶ τὸν θαυμαστὸν ἐκεῖνον τόκον τεκεῖν ἴσχυε τοιοῦτος, ἀρετῆς ἐκ ἔσης. Chryſ. in Matt. xii. 50.

* Luke xi. 27.

We might alſo here farther obſerve, that our Saviour upon other good accounts willingly did chooſe ſo mean a parentage; namely,

That he thence might have readier opportunity to undergo and taſte the greateſt inconveniences and hardſhips incident to our nature, thereby more fully meriting and ſuffering for us.

That he might have occaſion to exemplify the moſt

difficult virtues and duties, (humility, meekneſs, patience, contentedneſs,) ſhewing us how we ſhould virtuouſly comport with the loweſt ſtate; how we ſhould cheerfully ſuſtain wants, labours, pains, and diſgraces; how we ſhould contentedly be deſtitute of all the glories, riches, and pleaſures of this world. SERM. XXIV.

That alſo the divine power and glory might appear more conſpicuouſly through his worldly ſtate of impotency and baſeneſs.

That he might inſinuate the nature of his kingdom not to conſiſt in ſecular pomp and puiſſance, but in ſpiritual power over the hearts of men.

That he might diſcover wherein our happineſs doth conſiſt; how little any thing, which is high in vulgar eſteem of men, is an ingredient thereof: and what is the true grandeur of a man; not his outward garb and retinue, but his inward virtue and goodneſs.

Finally, this relation of the bleſſed Virgin to our Lord, as it ſhould beget a precious eſteem and honourable memory of her, (for let that mouth be curſed which will not call her bleſſed, let the name of him be branded with everlaſting reproach of folly, who will not prefer her in dignity before any queen or empreſs,) ſo it ſhould not ſerve to breed in us fond opinions, or to ground ſuperſtitious practices in regard to her, as it hath happened to do among divers ſorts of Chriſtians; eſpecially among the adherents to Rome. For,

They (out of a wanton mind, but in effect profanely and ſacrilegiouſly) have attributed to her divers ſwelling and vain names, divers ſcandalouſly unſavoury, ſome hideouſly blaſphemous, titles and elogies, as alluding to, ſo intrenching upon, the incommunicable prerogatives of God Almighty and of our bleſſed Saviour; ſuch as *the Queen of Heaven, the Health of the World, the Mother of Mercies, the Spouſe of God, Our Lady*, (as if, beſide our *unus Dominus*, there were *una Domina* in the Church, forgotten by St. Paul,) with the like. Eph. iv. 5. 1 Cor. viii. 6.

They aſcribe to her the moſt ſublime attributes of God,

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together with his moſt peculiar actions of providence and protection over us, yea of redemption itſelf.

They yield acts of religious veneration (prayer and praiſe) to her, and thoſe in a very high manner and ſtrain; profeſſing not only *to ſerve her* religiouſly, (which the holy Scripture chargeth us to do in regard to God and him only,) but ὑπερδουλεύειν, to do more than ſerve her, or to ſerve her with exceeding devotion.

Who commonly do at the end of their works join, *Praiſe be to God and to the bleſſed Virgin;* as if ſhe were to ſhare with God in the glory and gratitude due for bleſſing or ſucceſs upon our performances.

Laus Deo et B. Virgini.

All this they do, without any plain reaſon, any plauſible authority, any ancient example, yea manifeſtly enough againſt the beſt reaſon, the commands of God, the doctrine and practice of the primitive Church, all which do conſpire in appropriating religious adoration to God alone; neither the holy Scripture nor the firſt Fathers excepting the bleſſed Virgin from the general rule, or taking notice of her as an object of our worſhip, but nipping the firſt eſſays of ſuch a ſuperſtition in the Collyridians.

Such groundleſs and fooliſh conceits, ſuch dangerous and impious practices, we ſhould carefully beware; the which, as they much derogate from God's honour, and prejudice his ſervice, and thwart his commands, ſo they indeed do rather greatly diſcredit, injure, and abuſe the bleſſed Virgin, (making her name acceſſory to ſuch enormous ſcandals,) than they do bring any honour, or do any right to her.

And I doubt not, but, εἴ τις αἴσθησις, if ſhe from her ſeat of bliſs doth behold theſe perverſe ſervices, or abſurd flatteries of her, ſhe with holy regret and diſdain doth diſtaſte, loathe, diſdain, and reject them; with a *Non nobis Domine*, Pſal. 115. *Not unto us, O Lord;* and with the angel in the Apocalypſe, Ὅρα μή, *See thou do it not.*

Rev. xix. 10. xxii. 9. Acts x. 26. xiv. 14.

Whoſe greater honour it was, in truth, to be a meek and humble ſervant, than to be the mother of her Lord and Saviour; it is the chief and trueſt honour we can do

her, to esteem her great modesty and humility, to imitate her piety and grace, after her pattern conscientiously to reverence and obey her Son; unto whom therefore let us with hearty thankfulness render all glory and praise. *Amen.*

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Suffered under Pontius Pilate.

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1 Cor. i. 23.

*But we preach Christ * crucified.*

* Who was crucified. (τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον.)

† Λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ. 1 Cor. i. 18.

THE doctrine of the Gospel is called † *the word of the cross;* that is, a report concerning our Lord's crucifixion, together with a declaration of the ends, effects, and uses of it; this being a special and main point therein, whereto all the rest are closely allied, and whereon the whole method of our salvation dependeth; a point, which (as St. Paul in this and in several other places doth acquaint us) of all others did find the hardest entertainment among all sorts of people, to whom it was addressed; few auditors being disposed to swallow it, or able to digest it. The Jews were much offended, that one who suffered by their hands in so vile and wretched a manner should be propounded to them as their *Messias* and *King;* the same who, according to their opinions and hopes, (grounded on their ancient prophecies plausibly interpreted, and on their constant traditions,) was destined to restore them from their afflicted condition, and to rear them into a high state of prosperity. The Pagans took it for an extravagantly foolish conceit, that a person of so mean a quality and so miserable a fortune, should be such as was told them, *the Son of God,* and *Lord of all things,* the author of happiness, and the object of highest adoration to all men; very absurd and abominable this proposition did generally seem to the carnal and worldly prejudices of men, who little could understand, and less would consider the sublime de-

Celsus, Orig. lib. ii. p. 83, &c. lib. i. p. 368. Porphyrius. Aug. de Civ. D. x. 28. Lucian. Jul. apud Cyrill. vi. p. 194. Tryphon. apud Just. (p. 317.)

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ſign thereof; but to thoſe who (being endued with a meek heart, and enlightened by divine grace) did rightly apprehend and duly weigh it, it did afford great ſatisfaction and comfort; it had on them a moſt effectual and beneficial influence; proving indeed unto them *the power of God to ſalvation;* as raiſing in them ſtrong hopes of ſalvation, and engaging them in a practice conducible thereto. Upon this point therefore our Lord's ambaſſadors, the holy Apoſtles, in their preaching chiefly did inſiſt, declaring the great ends and excellent fruits of our bleſſed Saviour's crucifixion; according to that of St. Paul, *I determine to know nothing among you ſave Chriſt, and him crucified.*

1 Cor. i. 18. Rom. i. 16.

1 Cor. ii. 2.

It is therefore queſtionleſs a moſt profitable, and ever (eſpecially now, when our Lord's paſſion is by the Church ſolemnly commemorated) very ſeaſonable ſubject of our meditation; apt to excite good thoughts, good affections, and good reſolutions in us; and as ſuch, I mean now to recommend and apply it; endeavouring to aſſiſt your meditation by ſuggeſting ſome remarkable particulars concerning it; and in my diſcourſe I ſhall not ſo much generally conſider the death and paſſion of our Lord, as the particular manner and kind thereof, by crucifixion; the which we may contemplate, as qualified with divers notable adjuncts; namely, 1. As a ſuffering in appearance criminal. 2. As moſt bitter and painful. 3. As moſt ignominious and ſhameful. 4. As agreeable and advantageous to the intents of his paſſion. 5. As completory of ancient preſignifications and predictions. 6. As apt to excite devotion in us, and to enforce on us the practice of our duty.

Tryphon the Jew, in Juſtin Martyr, doth confeſs, that Chriſt, according to the prophecies of holy Scripture, was to ſuffer; but it did offend him that he ſhould ſuffer in this kind. *Juſt. Mart.* p. 317.

I. Let us conſider it as a ſuffering in appearance criminal; or a ſeeming execution of juſtice upon our Lord, as a malefactor; *He was,* as the Prophet foretold, *numbered among the tranſgreſſors;* and, *God,* ſaith St. Paul, *made him ſin for us, who knew no ſin;* that is, God ordered him to be dealt with as an exceedingly ſinful or criminous perſon, who in himſelf was perfectly innocent, and void of the leaſt tendency to any fault: ſo in effect it was, that he

Iſa. liii. 12. 2 Cor. v. 21.

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was impeached of the higheſt crimes, not only as a violator of the divine law, in breaking the ſabbath, in keeping bad company, and holding an over-free converſation; but as an impoſtor, deluding and ſeducing the people; as a blaſphemer, aſſuming to himſelf the properties and prerogatives of God; as a ſeditious and rebellious perſon, *perverting the nation*, forbidding the payments of tribute to Cæſar, uſurping royal authority, and pretending to be *Chriſt a King*; in general, as a *κακοποιὸς*, *a malefactor*, or one guilty of notable crimes; ſo his proſecutors (in the Goſpel) did affirm; *If*, ſaid they to Pilate, *he were not a malefactor, we ſhould not have delivered him up unto thee:* as ſuch he was repreſented and arraigned; and that, although by a ſentence wreſted from the judge againſt his conſcience, by the malicious importunity of his accuſers, he was condemned, and in pretence ſuffered as ſuch, is clear, and admitted by all.

John v. 18. x. 30. vii. 12.

Luke xxiii. 2. Matt. xxvii. 63.

John xviii. 30.

Now whereas any death or paſſion of our Lord (as being in itſelf infinitely valuable, and moſt precious in the ſight of God) might have been ſufficient toward the accompliſhing the general deſigns of his paſſion, the expiation of our guilt, the appeaſement of God's wrath, the ſatisfaction of divine juſtice; it might be inquired, why God ſhould ſo expoſe him, and why he ſhould chooſe to ſuffer under this odious and ugly character: to ſatisfy this demand, and that we may the more admire the wiſdom and goodneſs of God in this great diſpenſation, divers reaſons may be aſſigned, which are intimated in holy Scripture, or bear a conformity to its doctrine, why it was ſo ordered. For,

1. As our Saviour freely did undertake a life of greateſt meanneſs and hardſhip, ſo upon the like accounts he might be pleaſed to undergo a death, of all moſt bitter and uncomfortable: there is nothing to man's nature (eſpecially to honeſt and ingenuous nature, wherein natural modeſty is not extinct) more abominable than ſuch a death: God for good purpoſes hath planted in our conſtitution a lively ſenſe of diſgrace; and of all diſgraces that which proceedeth from an imputation of heinous crimes

is moſt diſguſtful and pungent; and being conſcious of our innocence, doth increaſe the ſmart; and to reflect upon ourſelves dying under it, or leaving the world with an indelible ſtain upon our name and memory, is yet more grievous; even to languiſh by degrees, enduring the torments of a long, however ſharp diſeaſe, would, to any ingenuous perſon, be far more eligible, than in this manner (of being reputed and treated as a villain) to find a quick and eaſy diſpatch; ſome touch of which reſentment we may conceive breaking forth in our Lord, and ſomewhat of man's nature diſcovering itſelf in that queſtion; *Be ye come out as againſt a thief, with ſwords and ſtaves?* He did, it ſeems, as a man, loathe to be proſecuted as a thief; yet he willingly choſe it; as he purpoſely did embrace other the worſt of diſtaſteful things belonging to our nature, and incident to that lowly condition, into which he did put himſelf, (not only *being made in the likeneſs of man,* but *taking the form of a ſervant;*) to endure want, and to fare hardly; to be ſlighted, envied, hated, ſcorned, and reproached through the whole courſe of his life. Had he died in any other way, he had not been ſo complete a ſufferer, nor had taſted the worſt of what men can and do endure; there had been a comfort in ſeeming innocent, which had impaired the perfection of his undertaking. Often was he in danger of death, both from the cloſe machinations, and from the open violences of thoſe who maligned him; but he induſtriouſly declined a death ſo eaſy, and ſo honourable, if I may ſo ſpeak; it not being ſo diſgraceful to fall by private malice, or by ſudden rage, as by the ſolemn and deliberate proceeding of perſons in public authority and great credit.

Luke xxii. 52. Matt. xxvi. 55.

Phil. ii. 7.

John v. 18. viii. 37, 40, 59. vii. 1, 19, 25. x. 32, 39.

This kind of death he did foreſee, and plainly with ſatisfaction did aim at; he (as we have it related in the Goſpels) did ſhew his diſciples, that it was incumbent on him (by God's appointment, and his own choice) ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ παθεῖν, *that he ought to ſuffer many things; to be reprobated by the chief prieſts, elders, and ſcribes; to be vilified by them*; to be *condemned, and delivered up to the*

Matt. xvi. 21. Luke ix. 22. Mark ix. 12. Ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι, ἐξουδενοῦσθαι.

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Gentiles, εἰς τὸ ἐμπαῖξαι, to be mocked, and ſcourged, and crucified; as a moſt flagitious ſlave.

Thus would our Saviour, in conformity to all the reſt of his voluntary afflictions, and for a conſummation of them, not only ſuffer in his body by ſore bruiſes and wounds, in his ſoul by the bitereſt ſorrows and agonies; but in his name alſo and reputation by the fouleſt ſcandals; undergoing as well all the infamy, as the infirmity which did belong unto us, or could befall us; thus meaning by all means to expreſs his charity, and exerciſe his compaſſion toward us; thus advancing his merit, and yielding the utmoſt ſatisfaction to juſtice in our behalf. Again,

2. Death paſſing on him as a malefactor by public judgment, did beſt ſuit to the nature of his undertaking, was moſt congruous to his deſign in ſuffering, did moſt aptly repreſent what he was doing, and imply the reaſon of his performance. We all were guilty in a moſt high degree; we deſerved an exemplary condemnation; the ſharpeſt pain, together with the greateſt ſhame, was due to us, for our unworthy offending our moſt great and our moſt good Lord and Maker; he did undertake in our ſtead to bear all this, and fully to ſatisfy for us; he therefore underwent the like judgment and puniſhment, being reputed, being termed, being treated as we ſhould have been, in quality of a notorious malefactor, as we in truth are. What we really had acted in diſhonouring and uſurping upon God, in diſordering and troubling the world, in deceiving and perverting others, (by our negligent miſtakes and our preſumptuous miſcarriages; by our evil practices and contagious examples,) that was imputed to him, and avenged on him; *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all;* he therefore did not only ſuſtain an equivalent puniſhment, but in a ſort did bear an equal blame with us before God and man. Farther,

Iſa. liii. 6.

3. Seeing it was determined that our Lord ſhould die

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for us, and that not in a natural but violent manner, ſo as perfectly to ſatisfy God's juſtice, to vindicate his honour, and to evidence his indignation againſt our ſins; it was moſt fit, that he ſhould perform it in that way, wherein God's right is moſt nearly concerned, and his providence moſt diſcernible; wherein it ſhould be moſt apparent, that God did exact and inflict puniſhment on him, that he did yield unto it, and ſubmiſſively undergo it. *All judgment*, as Moſes ſaid in his charge, *is God's;* or is adminiſtered in his name, by authority derived from him; all magiſtrates being his officers and inſtruments, by whom he governeth and ordereth the world, his kingdom; whence that which is done in way of formal judgment by perſons in authority, God himſelf may be ſuppoſed in a more ſpecial and immediate manner to execute it, as being done by his commiſſion, in his ſtead, on his behalf; with his peculiar ſuperintendance and guidance: it was therefore in our Saviour a ſignal act of ſubmiſſion to God's authority and juſtice, becoming the perſon which he ſuſtained, of our proxy and redeemer, to undergo ſuch a judgment, and ſuch a puniſhment; whereby he received a doom, as it were, from God's own mouth, uttered by his miniſters; and bare the ſtroke of juſtice from God's hand, repreſented by his inſtruments; wherefore very ſeaſonably and pertinently did he reply to Pilate, avowing his authority under God in thoſe words, *Thou hadſt no power over me,* (or againſt me,) *except it were given thee from above;* implying, it was in regard to that originally ſupreme authority of God his Father, and to his particular appointment upon that occaſion, that our Saviour did then freely ſubject himſelf to thoſe inferior and ſubordinate powers, as to the proper miniſters of divine juſtice; had he ſuffered in any other way, by any private malice or paſſion of men, God's ſpecial providence in that caſe had been leſs viſible, and Chriſt's obedience not ſo remarkable; and if he muſt die by public hands, it muſt be as a criminal, under a pretence of guilt and demerit; there muſt be a formal proceſs, how full ſoever of mockery and outrage; there muſt be teſtimonies produced, however falſe and groundleſs;

Deut. i. 2 Chron. xix. 6.

Κατ' ἐμοῦ. John xix. 11.

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there muſt be a ſentence pronounced, although moſt partial and corrupt; for no man is perſecuted by authority without ſome colour of deſert; otherwiſe it would ceaſe to be public authority, and become private violence; the proſecutor then would put off the face of a magiſtrate, and appear as a murderer, or a thief.

4. In fine, our Saviour perhaps in no other way, with ſuch advantage, could have diſplayed all kinds of virtue and goodneſs, to the honour of God, and the furtherance of our benefit, as in this: the judgment-hall, with all the paſſages leading him thither, and from thence to execution, attended on by guards of ſoldiers, among the crowds and clamours of the people, were as ſo many theatres, on which he had opportune convenience viſibly, in the eye of the world, to act divers parts of ſublimeſt virtue; to expreſs his inſuperable conſtancy in atteſting truth and maintaining a good conſcience, his meekneſs in calmly bearing the greateſt wrongs, his patience in contentedly enduring the ſaddeſt adverſities; his entire reſignation to the will and providence of God; his peaceable ſubmiſſion to the law and power of man; his admirable charity in pitying, in excuſing, in obliging thoſe, by his good wiſhes and earneſt prayers for their pardon, who in a manner ſo injurious, ſo deſpiteful, ſo cruel, did perſecute him; yea in willingly ſuffering all this for their ſalvation: all theſe excellent virtues and graces, by the matter being thus ordered, were in a degree moſt eminent, and in a manner very conſpicuous, demonſtrated to the praiſe of God's name, and the advancement of his truth; for the ſettlement of our faith and hope; for an inſtruction and encouragement of good practice to us. Upon ſuch conſiderations it might be expedient, that he ſhould ſuffer in this kind as a criminal.

Was crucified.

SERMON XXVI.

1 Cor. i. 23.

But we preach Christ crucified.

It is added in the Creed, **under Pontius Pilate**; ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου; in which words the prepositions ἐπὶ may either denote the circumstance of time, when our Saviour's passion did happen; in the time of Pontius Pilate's government, or presidency over Judea; so the word ἐπὶ is very frequently used: or it may also farther imply a respect to that person, as an instrument of our Saviour's passion; so that it might also be rendered, by, or under, Pontius Pilate, as president and judge: thus is the word sometimes used, (as for instance, where in the Gospel it is said, ἐὰν ἀκουσθῇ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος, *if this be heard by the governor*, or, *if it come to the governor's ear*, as it is rendered in our translation.) Neither of these senses were, I suppose, distinctly, but both rather conjunctly intended here; in relation to the evangelical history; the which (as to the main obvious passages) we are here supposed to know, and do profess to believe; neither do I think any thing more of mystery designed here beyond the full and clear determination of our Saviour's person; or the declaration of whom we do believe in by circumstances most apt and suitable to that purpose; the *time when*, the *person under whom*, and consequently the *place where*, and *manner how*

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Matt. xxviii. 14.

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he ſuffered. However all theſe circumſtances are in themſelves conſiderable, and afford ſome matter of edification to our faith and practice: let us therefore touch them.

1. The *time*, in itſelf moſt fit, and moſt agreeable to divine predictions, doth illuſtrate the wiſdom of God in his providence, doth confirm his veracity, his conſtancy, and his fidelity: for when the fulneſs of time was come; when the ſceptre of legiſlation and ſovereign authority was juſt departed from Judah; while the Jewiſh temple did ſtand, but was ſhortly to be deſtroyed; before the Jews were utterly unſettled and diſperſed; when the *ſeventy hebdomades* (of years) were near expiring, the time when the
Dan. ix. 26. *Meſſias ſhould be cut off;* when Judaiſm was by numerous acceſſion of proſelytes diffuſed over the world, the ſacred writings being tranſlated, and legible everywhere; when the world was in the moſt general peace and deepeſt calm, conſequently men's attention being then more ready, and their minds more capable of inſtruction and perſuaſion concerning divine truths; when the moſt conſiderable part of the world was united under one empire, (or under two, that of the Romans, and that of the Parthians,) and thence more fit to be incorporated into a ſpiritual commonwealth, (to communicate in offices of piety, to impart and receive inſtruction;) when mankind by learning and policy was generally better civilized than ever, more inquiſitive after knowledge, and more receptive of truth; when, in ſhort, all things were duly prepared and ſuited for the great effects deſigned by God to proceed from our Saviour's paſſion, and other performances, then did he ſuffer and do what God had in his wiſdom and goodneſs predetermined, preſignified, and predicted. I might add, that the time was fit to be ſet down, as a character apt to confirm the truth of the hiſtory; for direction to a fair inquiry and trial concerning it; to exclude all confuſion and uncertainty about it.

2. As for the *perſon* under whom our Lord ſuffered; if we conſider him as a *Roman ſtranger*, (or *Gentile*,) or as a *governor* and *judge;* or with regard to his perſonal qualities; or according to his deportment in this affair;

ſomething in all theſe reſpects may preſent itſelf obſervable by us.

He was an alien from the commonwealth of Iſrael; ſo Jews and Gentiles conſpired in violence and injury againſt their common Saviour; that ſo in type and myſtery it might be ſignified how the ſins of all men did jointly bring him to his death; *that every mouth might be ſtopped, and all the world might become guilty before God.* Neither was it for nothing decreed by God, that the Jews ſhould (as our Saviour foretold) *deliver him up* (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) to the Gentiles, *to mock, and ſcourge, and crucify him.* The Jews out of envy and malice delivered him up, accuſed and proſecuted him, inſtigated and importuned againſt him; the Gentiles, out of ignorance, profaneneſs, and unjuſt partiality, condemned and executed him; whereby the ingratitude, iniquity, and impiety of all mankind did in ſome ſort appear, and was aptly repreſented; and conſequently his immenſe goodneſs is demonſtrated, who for ſo impious, unjuſt, and flagitious a generation, for ſo malicious enemies, for ſo cruel perſecutors of himſelf, did willingly ſuffer: them, who ſo combined in miſchief againſt him, he then deſigned to conjoin in reconciliation to God, and in mutual peace and charity toward one another; *reconciling both unto God in one body by the croſs, having ſlain the enmity thereby.*

Rom. iii. 19.

Matt. xx. 19. xxvii. 18.

Rom. v. 6, 8, 10. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Eph. ii. 16. Col. i. 20.

A *ſtranger* alſo was proper for the management of this affair, as apt to be a more fair and indifferent judge; doing what was deſigned and fit to be done in our Saviour's trial, for vindication of his perſonal innocence, and declaration of the iniquity practiſed againſt him.

Again, if we conſider Pilate as a governor and judge, (for ſo he was, Cæſar's procurator, and preſident of Judea, ἐπίτροπος, and ἡγεμὼν he is called;) we therein may diſcern the wiſdom and ſpecial providence of God; puniſhing our Saviour for us by his own officer in a courſe of juſtice; the loyal obedience of our Saviour ſubmitting both to God and to man, although in a caſe of plain outrage and higheſt injuſtice againſt himſelf; the heinouſneſs of that wicked proceeding, wherein that ſacred power committed

Matt. xxvii. 2, &c.

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by God to men, and the venerable name of juſtice were ſo abuſed; for if ever, then one might have ſaid with the Preacher, *I ſaw the place of judgment, that wickedneſs was there; and the place of righteouſneſs, that iniquity was there.*

Eccleſ. iii. 16.

As for Pilate's perſonal qualities; he is by the hiſtorians writing near thoſe times reported to have been a man of a harſh and rough temper; wilful and haughty in ſpirit; violent, rapacious, and cruel in his proceedings; and was therefore a proper inſtrument of Providence for execution of ſuch a buſineſs; ſo holy and gracious in God's purpoſe, ſo villanous and barbarous according to man's intention; ſuch a perſon deſerved to bear the guilt of a fact ſo execrably baſe; was worthy to be employed therein, and ready enough to undergo it: it had not in itſelf been ſo plauſible that ſuch an act ſhould, nor ſo credible that it could, proceed from any perſon otherwiſe of good diſpoſition, or right intention; but for him it was proper, of him it could not be improbable; who by his former violences (ſuch as upon the complaints of this people did ſoon after, as Joſephus telleth, remove him from his charge) had ſo incenſed the Jews, that he would not ſtick to gratify them in a matter wherein they ſo earneſtly concerned themſelves; and which in ſemblance (ſetting aſide conſiderations of juſtice and honeſty, ſo little material in ſuch a perſon's regard) ſo little touched his own intereſt; in yielding up ſo poor, ſo as to outward ſhew inconſiderable a perſon, as a boon or ſacrifice to their importunate rage; *Pilate*, ſaith St. Mark, *willing to content the people, releaſed Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jeſus, when he had ſcourged him, to be crucified.*

Joſeph. Antiq. xviii. 5.

Mark xv. 15. Τὸ ἱκανὸν ποιῆσαι τῷ ὄχλῳ.

Such an one he was; and yet it is obſervable, that in compariſon to the furious Jews, he behaved himſelf with ſome moderation and ingenuity: he was ſo fair in examination of the caſe, as, notwithſtanding their eager and clamorous proſecution, to diſcern the right, and to declare our Saviour guiltleſs: he was ſo far conſtant and true to his conſcience, as to expoſtulate with the Jews, and once, twice, a third time, to challenge them, *Why, what evil*

John xix. 6. Luke xxiii. 14, &c.

John xix. 12. ἐζήτει.

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hath he done? As often did he discover his inclination and readiness (yea, his will and intention, his earnest desire—) to free the innocent person: yet had he not the heart or the honesty throughly to resist their importunities; they were more obstinate in their wicked designs, than he resolute in his good purposes: so partly out of fear to offend them, partly out of favour to oblige them, (those two usual corrupters of right judgment,) he yielded to them, unworthily suffering himself to be overborne by their wicked solicitations, so sacrificing acknowledged innocence to his own private interest and their implacable malice. Thus did the heathen judge behave himself, serving divine Providence, not only in the public and formal condemnation of our Saviour to the punishment due unto us, but in the solemn and serious absolution of him from all blame deserved by himself: in shew he condemned our Saviour; in truth he condemned himself, the corrupt judge; and the Jews, the malicious accusers: though he took away his life, yet he cleared his reputation; affording a testimony most valid and convincing of his innocence; such as was requisite to convince all Jewish slanders and aspersions; and sufficient to confirm our faith.

Luke xxiii. 20. Acts iii. 13. Κρίναντος ἐκείνου ἀπολύειν.

3. Farthermore, the name of Pontius Pilate intimateth the *place* of our Saviour's passion; he being well known to have been governor of Judea, and to have his tribunal of justice at the mother-city thereof, Jerusalem: at Jerusalem, *that bloody city*, as the Prophet calls it, whose character it was to be the *killer of the Prophets, and the stoner of them who were sent unto her; out of which it was* (in a sort) *impossible*, that a Prophet should perish; yet the place of all the world most favoured, and graced by God by special blessings and privileges; at Jerusalem, his own peculiar seat; *the city of God, the city of the great King*, it is styled; the which he *out of all the tribes of Israel, out of all the people of the earth, had chosen to put his name* (to place his especial presence) *there; the holy* and *beloved city;* there at his own doors, as it were, before his own sacred palace, where most especial respect and veneration were due to him, was the King of heaven adjudged

Ezek. xxii. 2. xxiv. 6. Luke xiii. 33, 34. Psal. xlviii. 2. lxxxvii. 3. Deut. xii. 5. Neh. ix. 1. Ezra vi. 12. 1 Kings xi. 32. Matt. iv. 5. xxvii. 53. Rev. xx. 9, &c.

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and executed; by procurement of his own ſervants, peculiarly related to him, the chief prieſts and elders of his choſen people, perſons wholly devoted to his ſervice, and highly dignified by him; whoſe office and eſpecial duty it was to maintain truth and encourage righteouſneſs, to procure, by their inſtruction and practice, honour to God and obedience to his commandments; which circumſtance conſidered, as it highly advances the goodneſs of him who willingly ſuffered there, and by ſuch perſons, ſo it much aggravateth man's ingratitude and iniquity.

I ſhall now proceed to handle the reſt of the particulars which I propoſed in the beginning of the laſt diſcourſe.

II. We may conſider that his ſuffering was moſt bitter and painful. We may eaſily imagine, what acerbity of pain muſt be endured by our Lord, in his tender limbs being ſtretched forth, racked, and tentered, and continuing a good time in ſuch a poſture; by the *piercing his hands and his feet*, parts exquiſitely ſenſible, with ſharp nails, (ſo that, as it is ſaid of Joſeph, *the iron entered into his ſoul*,) by abiding expoſed to the injuries of ſun ſcorching, wind beating upon, weather ſearching his grievous wounds and ſores: ſuch a pain it was, and that no ſtupifying, no tranſient pain, but a pain very acute, and withal lingering: for we ſee that he, and thoſe who ſuffered with him, had both preſence of mind and time to diſcourſe; even ſix long hours did he continue under ſuch torture, ſuſtaining in each minute of them beyond the pangs of an ordinary death. But as the caſe was ſo hard and ſad, ſo the reaſon thereof was great, and the fruit anſwerably excellent; our Saviour did embrace ſuch a paſſion, that in being thus ready to endure the moſt grievous ſmarts for us, he might demonſtrate the vehemence of his love; that he might ſignify the heinouſneſs of our ſins, which deſerved that from ſuch a Perſon, ſo heavy puniſhment ſhould be exacted; that he might appear to yield a valuable compenſation for thoſe everlaſting tortures which we ſhould have endured; that he might thoroughly exemplify the hardeſt duties of obedience and patience. Farther,

Pſal. cv. 18. O. T.

Mark xv. 25, 34.

III. We may consider this sort of punishment, as most sharp and afflictive, so most vile and shameful; being proper to the basest condition of the worst men, and *unworthy*, as Lactantius saith, *of a freeman, however nocent or guilty.* It was *servile supplicium*, a punishment never by the Romans, under whose law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon freemen, but only upon slaves, that is, upon people scarce regarded as men, having in a sort forfeited or lost themselves; and among the Jews likewise, that execution which most approached thereto, and in part agreed with it, (for they had no so inhuman punishment appointed by their law,) hanging up the dead bodies of some who had been executed, was deemed most infamous and execrable; for *cursed*, said the Law, *is every one that hangeth upon a tree;* cursed, that is, devoted to reproach and malediction; *accursed of God*, it is in the Hebrew; that is, seeming to be deserted by God, or to be exposed to affliction by his special order.

Quod etiam homine libero quamvis nocente videatur indignum. *Lact.* iv. (p. 436.)

Deut. xxi. 23.

Gal. iii. 16.

Τοῦτο γὰρ μόνον τῆς τελευτῆς τὸ εἶδος ὑπὸ ἀρᾶν ἔκειτο. *Chrys.* tom. vi. Or. 61.

Indeed, according to course of things, to be raised on high, and for continuance of time to be objected to the view of all that pass by, in that calamitous posture, doth breed ill suspicion, doth provoke censure, doth invite contempt, scorn, and obloquy; doth naturally draw forth language of derision, despite, and detestation, especially from the inconsiderate, rude, and hard-hearted vulgar; which commonly doth think, speak, deal with men according to event and appearance, (—*sequitur fortunam semper et odit damnatos*,) whence θεατρίζεσθαι, *to be made a gazing-stock*, or object of reproach to the multitude, is accounted by the Apostle as an aggravation of the hardships endured by the primitive Christians: and thus in the highest degree did it happen to our Lord; for we read that the people did in that condition mock, jeer, and revile him; ἐξεμυκτήριζον, ἐνέπαιζον, ἐβλασφήμουν, they drew up their noses, they shot out their lips, they shaked their heads at him; they let out their wicked and wanton tongues against him; verifying that prediction in the Psalm, *I am a reproach of men, and despised of the people; all they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the*

Heb. x. 33.

Luke xxiii. 35, 36. Matt. xxvii. 38.

Psal. xxii. 6, 7.

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lip, they ſhake the head, ſaying, He truſted in the Lord, that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighted in him: in this caſe the ſame perſons who formerly had admired his glorious works, who had been raviſhed with his excellent diſcourſes, who had followed and favoured him ſo earneſtly, who had bleſſed and magnified him, (for *he*, ſaith St. Luke, did *teach in their ſynagogues*, δοξαζόμενος ὑπὸ πάντων, *being glorified by all*,) even thoſe very men did then behold him with pitileſs ſcorn and deſpite; εἱςήκει ὁ λαὸς θεωρῶν, *the people*, ſaith St. Luke, *ſtood gazing upon him*, in correſpondence to that in the Prophet, *They look and ſtare upon me;* they looked in a ſcornful manner, venting contemptuous and ſpiteful reproaches, as we ſee reported in the evangelical hiſtories.

Matt. ix. 33. xxi. 9. xii. 23. Luke iv. 15. Luke xxiii. 35. Pſal. xxii. 17.

Thus did our Saviour *endure the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame;* deſpiſing the ſhame, that is, not ſimply diſregarding or diſeſteeming it, as no evil, with a Stoical haughtineſs, or Cynical immodeſty; but not eſchewing it, or not valuing it as ſo great an evil, that for declining it he would neglect the proſecution of his great and glorious deſigns. There is in man's nature an averſation and abhorrency from diſgraceful abuſe, no leſs ſtrong than are the like antipathies to pain; whence cruel *mockings and ſcourgings* we find coupled together, as ingredients of the ſore perſecutions ſuſtained by God's faithful martyrs; and generally men will more readily embrace, and more contentedly ſupport the latter than the former; pain not ſo grievouſly affecting the lower ſenſe, as being inſolently deſpiſed doth grate on the fancy and wound the mind; for the *wounds* of infamy do, as the Wiſe Man telleth us, *go down into the innermoſt parts of the belly*, piercing the very hearts of men, and touching the ſoul to the quick. We need not therefore doubt, but that our Saviour (as a man, endued with human paſſions and infirmities) was ſenſible of this natural evil; and that ſuch indignity did add ſomewhat of bitterneſs and loathſomeneſs to his cup of affliction; eſpecially conſidering that his great charity diſpoſed him to grieve, obſerving men to act ſo very indecently, ſo unworthily, and ſo unjuſtly toward him; yet in

Heb. xii. 2. Heb. xi. 36. Prov. xviii. 8. xii. 18.

consideration of the glory that would thence accrue to God, of the benefit that would redound to us, of *the joy that was set before him*, when he *should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied*, he did most willingly undertake and gladly undergo it: *He became*, as the Apostle saith, *a curse for us*, or was exposed to malediction and reviling; he endured *the contradiction* (or obloquy) *of sinful men*, he was *despised, rejected, and disesteemed of men*; he in the common apprehensions of men did seem deserted by God, according to that of the Prophet, *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*; he did himself in a manner seem to concur in that opinion, as by that woful outcry, *Lama sabacthani?* doth appear; so did he become a curse for us, *that*, as the Apostle subjoineth, *we might be redeemed from the curse of the Law*, that is, that we might be saved from that exemplary punishment due to our transgressions of the Law; with the displeasure of God appearing therein, and the disgrace before men attending it: he chose thus to *make himself of no reputation*, as the Apostle speaketh, being contented to be dealt with as a wretched slave and wicked miscreant, that we might be exempted not only from the torment, but also from the ignominy we had deserved; that we, together with our life, and safety, and liberty, might recover even that honour which we had forfeited.

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Heb. xii. Isa. liii. 1

Gal. iii. 1

Heb. xii. Isa. liii. 3,

Phil. ii. 7

But lest any one should be tempted not sufficiently to value these sufferings of our Lord, as things not so rare, but that other men have tasted the like; or should be ready to compare them with the sufferings of other virtuous men, as Celsus did with those of Anaxarchus and Epictetus; I shall by the bye interpose somewhat observable concerning them. We may then consider, that not only the infinite excellency of his person, and the perfect innocency of his life, did enhance the price of his sufferings, but some endowments peculiar to him, and some circumstances, did increase their force: he was not only, according to the frame and temper of human nature, sensibly affected with the pain and shame, and all the rest of evils apparently waiting on his passion; as God (when he

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did infert fenfe and paffion in our nature, ordering objects to affect them) did intend that we fhould be, and as other men in like outward circumftances would have been, but in many refpects beyond that ordinary rate; no man, we may fuppofe, could have felt fuch grief from them as he did; no man did ever feel any thing comparable to what he did endure; it might be truly applied to him, *Behold, and fee if there be any forrow like to my forrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger*, as that extraordinary *fweating great lumps of blood* may argue; as the terms expreffing his affliction do intimate; for, in regard to prefent evils, *his foul* is faid to have been *exceedingly forrowful unto death*; he is faid, ἀδημονῶν, to be in great anguifh and anxiety; and to be in an agony, or pang; in refpect to mifchiefs which he foreffaw coming on, he is faid, ταράττεσθαι τῷ πνεύματι, to be difordered, or *difturbed in fpirit*, and ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, to be amazed, or difmayed at them; to fuch exceffive height of paffion did the fenfe of incumbent evils and the profpect of impendent difafters, the apprehenfion of his own cafe and reflection upon our ftate, raife him: and no wonder, that fuch a burden, the weight of all the fins (the numberlefs heinous fins and abominations) which he did appropriate to himfelf, that ever have been, or fhall be committed by mankind, lying upon his fhoulders, he fhould feel it heavy, he fhould feem to crouch and groan under it; *Innumerable evils*, faid he in the myftical Pfalm, *have compaffed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, fo that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head: therefore my heart faileth me.* God's indignation fo dreadfully flaming out againft fin might well aftonifh and terrify him; to ftand before the mouth of hell belching out fire and brimftone upon him, to lie down in the hotteft furnace of divine vengeance, to undertake with his heart-blood to quench all the wrath of heaven and all the flames of hell, (as he did in regard to thofe who will not rekindle them to themfelves,) might well in the heart of a man beget unconceivable and unexpreffible preffures of anguifh; when

Lam. i. 12. Luke xxii. 44. Πάθεσιν ἐν δυνάμει. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. Luke xxii. 44. Ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ γενόμενος. John xiii. 21. xii. 27. Mark xiv. 33.

Pfal. xl. 12.

ſuch a Father (ſo infinitely good and kind to him, and whom he ſo dearly loved) did hide his face from him, did angrily frown on him, how could he otherwiſe than be ſorely troubled? It is not ſtrange, that ſo hearty a love, ſo tender a pity contemplating our ſinfulneſs, and ſuſtaining our wretchedneſs, ſhould be deeply affected thereby; any one of thoſe perſons, who fondly do pretend to, or vainly glory in, a ſtupid apathy, or in a ſtubborn contempt of the evils incident to our nature and ſtate, would in ſuch a caſe have been utterly dejected; the moſt reſolved philoſopher would have been daſhed into confuſion at the ſight, would have been cruſhed to deſpair under the ſenſe of thoſe calamities which aſſaulted our Lord. With the greatneſs of the cauſes, the goodneſs of his conſtitution might alſo conſpire to augment his ſuffering; for ſurely as his complexion was moſt pure and delicate, his ſpirit moſt vivid and apprehenſive, his affections moſt pliant and tractable; ſo accordingly ſhould the impreſſions upon him be moſt ſenſible; and conſequently the pains which he felt both in ſoul and body moſt ſharp and afflictive. That we in like caſes are not alike affected, that we do not tremble at the apprehenſions of God's diſpleaſure, that we are not affrighted with the ſenſe of our ſins, that we do not with ſad horror reſent our own danger or our miſery, doth ariſe from that we have very glimmering and faint conceptions of thoſe things, or that they do not in ſo clear and lively a manner ſtrike our mind and fancy; (not appearing in their true nature and proper ſhape, ſo heinous and ſo hideous, as they really in themſelves and in their conſequences are,) or becauſe that we have but weak perſuaſions about them; or becauſe we do but ſlightly conſider them; or from that our hearts are hard and callous, our affections cold and dull, ſo that nothing of this nature (nothing beſide groſs material affairs) can eaſily move or melt them; or for that we have in us ſmall love to God, and little regard to our own true welfare; for that briefly in reſpect to ſpiritual matters, we are neither ſo wiſe, ſo ſerious, ſo ſober, nor ſo good and ingenuous in any reaſonable meaſure, as we ought to be;

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but our Saviour in all these respects was otherwise disposed; he most evidently discerned the wrath of God, the grievousness of sin, the wretchedness of man most truly, most fully, most strongly represented to his imagination and spirit; he most firmly believed, yea most certainly knew all that God's law had declared about them; he thoroughly did consider and weigh them; his heart was most soft and sensible; his affections were most quick, and easily excited by their due objects; he was full of dutiful love to God his Father, and most ardently desirous of our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will toward us; whence it is not marvellous, that as a man, as a transcendently good man, he was so vehemently affected by those occurrences; that his imagination was so troubled, and his affections so mightily stirred by them; so that he thence truly did suffer in a manner and to a degree unconceiveable; according to that ejaculation in the Greek liturgies, Διὰ τῶν ἀγνώστων σου παθημάτων ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, Χριστέ· *By thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy on us.* But farther,

IV. We may consider, that this way of suffering had in it some particular advantages conducing to the accomplishment of our Lord's principal design.

Its being very notorious, and lasting a competent time, were good advantages; for if he had been privately made away, or suddenly dispatched, no such great notice would have been taken of it, nor would the matter of fact itself have been so fully proved to the confirmation of our faith, and conviction of infidelity; nor had that his excellent deportment under such bitter affliction, (his most divine patience, meekness, and charity,) so illustriously shone forth: wherefore (to prevent all exceptions, and excuses of unbelief, and for other collateral good purposes) divine Providence did so manage the business, that as the course of his life, so also the manner of his death should be most conspicuous and remarkable; *These things,* as St. Paul told King Agrippa, *were not done in a corner;* and, *I,* said our Lord himself, *spake freely to the world, and in secret have I done nothing;* so were the proceed-

Acts xxvi. 26.

John xviii. 20.

;s of his life, not close or clancular, but frank and
en; not presently hushed up, but carried on leisurely
the face of the world; that men might have the ad-
ntage to observe and examine them. And as he lived,
he died most publicly and visibly, the world being wit-
ſs of his death, and so prepared to believe his resur-
ction, and thence ready to embrace his doctrine; ac-
rding to what he did himself foretel, *I being lifted up* John xii. 32.
om the earth shall draw all men unto me; he drew all
en by so remarkable a death to take notice of it, he
ew some from the wondrous consequences of it to be-
ve on him: and, *As*, saith he again, *Moses did exalt the* John xiii.
pent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be ex- 14.
ted: the elevation of that mysterious serpent upon a
le did render it visible, and attracted the eyes of people
ward it; whereby God's power invisibly accompanying
at sacramental performance, they were cured of those
ortiferous stings which they had received; so our Lord
ing mounted on the cross, allured the eyes of men to
hold, and their hearts to close with him; whereby the
avenly virtue of God's Spirit cooperating, they become
ved from those destructive sins, which by the Devil's
rpentine instigations they had incurred.

Another advantage of this kind of suffering was, that
r it the nature of that kingdom, which he intended to
ect, was evidently signified; that it was not such as the
rnal people did expect, an external, earthly, temporal
ngdom, consisting in domination over the bodies and
tates of men, dignified by outward wealth and splendour,
anaged by worldly power and policy, promoted by
rce and terror of arms, affording to men the advantages
outward safety, peace, and prosperity; but a kingdom
rely spiritual, heavenly, eternal; consisting in the go-
ernment of men's hearts and spirits; adorned with en-
owments of piety and virtue, administered by the grace
nd guidance of God's Holy Spirit, maintained and pro-
agated by meek instruction, by virtuous example, by
earty devotion and humble patience; rewarding its
yal subjects with spiritual joys and consolations here, Rom. xiv.

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John xviii. 36.

Another advantage was this, that by it God's special providence was discovered, and his glory illustrated in the propagation of the Gospel; for how could it be, that a person of so low parentage, of so mean garb, of so poor condition, who underwent so woful and despicable a kind of death, falling under the pride and spite of his adversaries, should so easily gain so general an opinion in the world, (among the best, the wisest, the greatest persons,) of being *the Lord of life and glory;* how, I say, could it be, that such a miracle should be effected without God's aid and special concurrence? that Herod, who from a long reign in a flourishing state, with prosperous success in his undertakings, got the name of Great; or that Vespasian, who triumphantly did ascend the imperial throne, should either of them by a few admirers of worldly vanity, seriously or in flattery, be deemed the Messias, is not so very strange: but that one who so miserably was trampled on, and treated as a wretched caitif, should instantly conquer innumerable hearts, and from such a depth of extreme adversity should attain the sublimest pitch of glory; that *the stone which the builders* with so much scorn *did refuse, should become the head stone of the corner, this* (with good assurance we may say) *is the Lord's doing,*

Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61.

Psal. cxviii. 22, 23.

and it is marvellous in our eyes. It may well be ſo, and thereby *the excellency* of divine power and wiſdom was much glorified; by ſo impotent, ſo implauſible and improbable means, accompliſhing ſo great effects; ſubduing the world to his obedience, not by the active valour of an illuſtrious hero, but through the patient ſubmiſſion of a poor, abuſed, and oppreſſed perſon; reſtoring mankind to life by the death of a crucified Saviour.

2 Cor. iv. 7.
1 Cor. i. 27.

Again, this kind of ſuffering to the devout fathers did ſeem many ways ſignificant, or full of inſtructive and admonitive emblems; being a rich and large field for a devout fancy to range with affectionate meditation.

His poſture on the croſs might repreſent unto us that large and comprehenſive charity which he bare in his heart toward us, ſtretching forth his arms of kindneſs, pity, and mercy, with them, as it were, to embrace the world, receiving all mankind under the wings of his gracious protection.

Extendit in paſſione manus ſuas, &c. *Laſt.* iv. p. 437.

It might exhibit him as earneſtly wooing and entreating us to return unto God, accepting the reconciliation which he then was purchaſing, and did then offer to us; *I have ſpread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people,* ſaid God of old, doing it then mediately and figurately by his Prophets, but he did ſo now immediately and properly by himſelf; the croſs being as a pulpit, from which our Lord *God bleſſed for ever* did himſelf in perſon earneſtly preach the overtures of grace, did exhort to repentance, did tender the remiſſion of ſin, with action moſt pathetical and affecting.

Iſa. lxv. 2.

His aſcent to the croſs might ſet forth his diſcharging that high office of univerſal High Prieſt for all ages and all people; the croſs being an altar, whereon he did offer up his own fleſh, and pour forth his blood, as a pure and perfect ſacrifice, propitiating God and expiating the ſins of mankind.

Levit. ix. 22.
2 Chron. iv. 1.
Chryſ. tom. vi. Or. 82. Quod unquam ſacrificium ſacratius fuit, quam quod verus Pontifex altari crucis per immolationem ſuæ carnis impoſuit? *Leo M.* Ep. 88.

His elevation thither may ſuggeſt to our thoughts that ſubmiſſion to God's will, ſuffering for truth and righteouſneſs, the exerciſes of humility and patience, are conjoined with exaltation, do qualify for, and in effect pro-

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cure true preferment; so that the lower we stoop in humility, the higher we shall rise in favour with God, the nearer we shall approach to heaven, the surer we shall be of God's blessing, according to that aphorism of our Lord, *Whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted.* The cross was a throne, whereon humility and patience did sit in high state and glorious majesty, advanced above all worldly pride and insolence; it was a great step, a sure ascent unto the celestial throne of dignity superlative; for because our Lord *was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore did God far exalt him above all dignity and power in heaven and earth,* as St. Paul doth teach us.

Luke xviii. 4. Matt. xxiii. 12. 1 Pet. v. 5. James iv. 10. Phil. ii. 8, 9.

O the fallacy of human sense! O the vanity of carnal judgment! nothing ever was more auspicious or more happy than this event, which had so dismal an aspect, and provoked so contemptuous scorn in some, so grievous pity in others: the Devil thought he had done bravely, when he had by his suggestions brought the Son of God into this case; the world supposed itself highly prosperous in its attempts against him; but O how blind and foolish is malice, which then doth most hurt itself, when it triumpheth in the mischief which it doeth to others! How impotent is wickedness, which is never more thoroughly ruined than by its own greatest success! for by thus striving to debase our Lord, they most highly did advance him; by thus crossing our salvation, they most effectually did promote it.

Farther, looking up to the cross may admonish us how our salvation is acquired, and whence it doth proceed; not by casting our eyes downward, not from any thing that lieth upon earth; but *our help cometh from above,* our salvation is attained by looking upwards; we must lift up our eyes to behold our Saviour procuring it, we must raise up our hearts to derive it from him.

Our Lord's crucifixion may also intimate to us, how our flesh must be dealt with, and to what usage we must submit it; for we must not only imitate our Saviour in his holy life, but in some manner should resemble him in

his ghastly death; being, as St. Paul speaketh, *conformable to his death*, and *planted together with him in the likeness of it; mortifying our earthly members, crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts;* having our *old man crucified together with Christ, that the body of sin may be destroyed.* His death may fitly shadow our death to sin, his grievous pain the bitterness of our repentance, wherein our souls should be pierced with sharp compunction, as his sacred flesh was torn with nails; his shame that confusion of mind, which regard to our offences should produce within us

Συμμορφούμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ. Phil. iii. 10. Rom. vi. 5. Gal. ii. 20. v. 24. Col. iii. 5. Rom. viii. 13.

Reflecting on him we may also discern our state here; wherein, if we will be truly and thoroughly virtuous, we must be exposed to envy and hatred, to censure and obloquy, to contempt and scorn, to affliction and hardship; every good man must hang on some cross; εἰς τοῦτο κείμεθα, * *We are*, saith St. Paul, *appointed to this;* it is our lot and portion assigned to us by divine immutable decree; being † *predestinated to a conformity with this image of God's Son: We must*, as he did, *by many tribulations enter into the kingdom of God: All that will live godlily in Christ Jesus shall certainly suffer persecution*, one way or other partaking of his cross.

Passio ipsa per se acerba et amara specimen nobis futurorum tormentorum dabat, quam in hoc seculo morantibus virtus ipsa proponit— *Lact.* lib. iv.

* 1 Thess. iii. 3.

† Rom. viii. 29. Acts xiv. 22. 2 Tim. iii. 12.

Divers such analogies and resemblances devout meditation might extract from this matter, suggesting practical truths, and exciting good affections in us.

V. We may (for the confirmation of our faith, and begetting in us a due adoration of the divine wisdom and providence) observe the correspondency of this our Saviour's manner of suffering to the ancient prophecies foretelling, and the typical representations foreshewing it.

That most famous, clear, and complete prophecy concerning the passion, doth express him suffering as a malefactor, (*he was reckoned among the transgressors,*) suffering in a manner very painful, (he was *wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities,*) suffering in a most ignominious way, (he was *despised, and rejected of men,*

Isa. liii. 12, 5, 3. Mark xv. 28.

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In the 22d Psalm, the royal Prophet describeth an afflicted and forlorn condition, such as by no passages in the story concerning him doth in the full extent, and according to the literal signification of his words, appear suitable to his person, which therefore is more properly to be accommodated unto the Messias, whom he did represent; and in that description, among other passages agreeing to our Lord, these words do occur; *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death; for dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet;* which words how patly and livelily do they set out our Saviour's being nailed to the cross, and treated in that cruel and in that shameful way by his malicious adversaries?

Psal. xxii. 14, 16.

In the Prophet Zechariah, God speaking in his own name, *They* (namely some of the Jews, being sensible of what they had acted, and penitently affected for it, they) *shall look upon me, whom they have pierced;* which words need no violence to wring from them the right meaning, no comment to explain them, in accommodation to that matter, to which the Evangelists do apply them, and to which they are so literally congruous.

Zech. x. 10. John xix. 37.

The same was also fitly prefigured by apposite types. Isaac, the immediate *heir of the promise,* in whom the faithful seed was called and conveyed down, and so a most apt type of our Saviour, being devoted and offered up to God, did himself bear the wood by which he was to be offered: so did our Saviour, the promised seed, in *whom all nations should be blessed,* himself bear the cross by which he was to suffer, and to be offered up a sacrifice to God.

Gen. xxii. Rom. ix. 8. James ii. 21. Heb. xi. 17.

Those who were dangerously bitten by fiery serpents, were, by looking upon a brazen serpent set upon a pole, preserved in life, which (according to most authentic exposition) did represent the salvation, which should pro-

Tert. c. Jud. cap. 10.

ceed from our beholding and believing on him lifted up upon the croſs to us, who had been mortally ſtruck and ſtung by that old ſerpent's poiſonous inſinuations.

The paſchal lamb was a moſt congruous emblem of *Chriſt our paſſover*, (that moſt innocent and meek, moſt unblemiſhed and ſpotleſs Lamb, ſlain for the ſins of the world.) It was to be killed by the whole aſſembly of the congregation of Iſrael, its blood was to be daſhed on the ſide-poſts and croſs-beams of every door; its body was not to be eaten raw, nor ſodden with water, but roaſted whole, and dreſſed upon a ſpit; nor were any of its bones to be broken: which circumſtances, with ſo exact caution and care preſcribed, how they juſtly ſuit and fitly adumbrate this manner of our Saviour's paſſion, I need not otherwiſe than by the bare mention of them declare; every one eaſily being able to compare and adapt them.

1 Pet.

Exod. xii. 5, 6, 9, 46.

VI. Laſtly, the conſideration of our Lord's thus ſuffering is applicable to our practice; being moſt apt to inſtruct and affect us; admoniſhing us of our duty, and exciting us to a conſcionable performance thereof: no contemplation indeed is more fruitful, or more efficacious toward the ſanctification of our hearts and lives, than this of the croſs; for what good affection may not the meditation on it kindle? what virtue may it not breed and cheriſh in us?

1. How can it otherwiſe than inflame our heart with love toward our Lord, to think what acerbity of pain, what indignity of ſhame he did willingly undertake, and gladly endure for us? No imagination can deviſe a greater expreſſion of charity and friendſhip; and if love naturally is productive of love, if friendſhip meriteth a correſpondence in kindneſs, what effect ſhould the conſideration of ſuch ineffable love, of ſo incomparable friendſhip, have upon us?

John xv. 13. Eph. v. 2, 25. Gal. ii. 20. Rev. i. 5. Eph. iii. 19.

2. How can a reflection on this caſe otherwiſe than work hearty gratitude in us? Suppoſe any perſon for our ſake (that he might reſcue us from the greateſt miſ-

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chiefs, and purchase for us the highest benefits) willingly should deprive himself of all his estate, his honour, his ease and pleasure, should expose himself to extremest hazards, should endure the sorest pains and most disgraceful ignominies, should prostitute his life, and lose it in the most hideous manner: should we not then be monstrously ingrateful, if we did not most deeply resent such kindness; if upon all occasions we did not express our thankfulness for it; if we did not ever readily yield all the acknowledgment and all the requital we were able? The case in regard to our Lord is the same in kind, but in degree, whatever we can suppose, doth infinitely fall below the performances for us of him who stooped from the top of heaven, who laid aside the felicity and majesty of God, for the sorrows and infamies of the cross, that he might redeem us from the torments of hell, and procure to us the joys of heaven; so that our obligation to gratitude is unexpressibly great, and we are extremely unworthy, if the effects in our heart and life be not answerable.

3. What surer ground of faith in God, or stronger encouragement of hope can there be, than is hence afforded to us? for *if God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for our sake* to the suffering of these bitter pains and contumelies; how can we in any case distrust his bounty, or despair of his mercy? *How*, as St. Paul argueth, *shall he not also with him freely give us all things?* What higher favour could God express, what lower condescension could he shew; how more plainly or surely could he testify his willingness and his delight to do us good, than by ordering the Son of his love to undergo these most grievous things for us? How consequently could there be laid a stronger foundation of our hope and entire confidence in God?

Rom. viii. 32.

4. What greater engagement (in general) can there be to obedience, than to consider how readily and cheerfully our Lord did submit to the will of God, in bearing the most heavy yoke that could be imposed on him, in drinking the most bitter cup that could be tempered for him:

how that he *did humble himself, being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross?* how dearly he did purchase his property in us, and dominion over us? SERM. XXVI. Phil. ii. 8.

What detestation of our sins must the serious consideration of this event produce in us? of our sins, that brought such tortures and such reproaches on our blessed Redeemer. Judas the wretch who betrayed him, the Jewish Priests who did accuse and prosecute him, the wicked rout which abused and insulted over him, those cruel hands that smote him, those pitiless hearts that scorned him, those poisonous tongues that mocked and reviled him, all those, who anywise were instruments or abettors of his affliction, how do we loathe them! how do we detest and curse their memories! But how much greater reason have we to abominate our sins, which were the principal causes of all that woful tragedy! *He was delivered for our offences;* they were indeed the traitors, which by the hands of Judas delivered him up; *He that knew no sin was made sin for us;* that is, was accused, was condemned, was executed as a sinner for us: it was therefore we who by our sins did impeach him; the spiteful priests were but our advocates; we by them did adjudge and sentence him, Pilate (against his will and conscience) was but our spokesman; we by them did inflict that horrid punishment on him, the Roman executioners were but our agents therein: *He became a curse for us;* that is, all the mockery, derision, and contumely he endured did proceed from us; the silly people were but properties, acting our parts; our sins were they that cried out *Crucifige,* (*Crucify him, crucify him,*) with clamours more loud and more effectual than did all the Jewish rabble; it was they which by the borrowed throats of that base people did so outrageously persecute him; *He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;* it was they which by the hands of the fierce soldiers and of the rude populacy, as by senseless engines, did buffet and scourge him; they by the nails and thorns did pierce his flesh and rend his sacred body: upon them

Rom. iv. 25. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13. Isa. liii. 5.

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therefore it is moſt juſt and fit that we ſhould turn our hatred, that we ſhould diſcharge our indignation.

5. And what in reaſon can be more powerful to the breeding in us remorſe and penitent ſorrow, than reflection upon ſuch horrible effects proceeding from our ſins? how can we but earneſtly grieve, when we conſider ourſelves by them to have been the betrayers, the ſlanderers, the murderers of a perſon ſo innocent and lovely, of one ſo great and glorious, of God's dear Son, and the Lord of all things, of our own beſt friend, and moſt kind Saviour!

(Matt. xxvii. 42, 51. Luke xxiii. 44.)

6. If ingenuity will not operate ſo far, and hereby melt us into contrition, yet ſurely this conſideration muſt needs produce ſome fear within us; for can we at leaſt otherwiſe than tremble to think upon the heinous guilt of our ſins, upon the fierceneſs of God's wrath againſt them, upon the ſeverity of divine judgment for them, all ſo manifeſtly diſcovered, all ſo livelily ſet forth in this diſmal ſpectacle? If the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget in us ſome terror, ſome dread of the law, ſome reverence toward authority, what awful impreſſions ſhould this ſingular example of divine juſtice work upon us! How greatly we ſhould be moved thereby, we may learn from the deportment of the moſt inanimate creatures; the whole world did ſeem affected thereat with horror; the frame of things was diſturbed, all nature did feel a kind of compaſſion and compunction for it; the ſun (as out of averſion or ſhame) did hide his face, leaving the earth covered for three hours with mournful blackneſs; the bowels of the earth did yearn and quake; the rocks were rent; the vail of the temple was torn quite through; graves did open, and the bodies did wake; and can we (who are moſt concerned) be more ſtupid than the earth, more obdurate than rocks, more drowſy than buried carcaſes, the moſt inſenſible and immoveable things in nature?

7. How alſo can it but hugely deter us from wilful commiſſion of ſin, to conſider that by it we do, as the

Apoſtle teacheth, *recrucify the Son of God, and* again *expoſe him to open ſhame;* bringing upon the ſtage, and acting over all that direful tragedy; renewing (as to our guilt) all that pain and that diſgrace to him; that we thereby, as he telleth us, do *trample upon the Son of God, and prize the blood of the covenant* (that moſt ſacred and precious blood, ſo freely ſhed for the demonſtration of God's mercy, and the ratification of his gracious intentions toward us) *as a common thing,* of no ſpecial worth or conſideration with us; deſpiſing all his ſo kind and painful endeavours for our ſalvation; defeating his moſt gracious purpoſes and earneſt deſires for our welfare; rendering all his ſo bitter and loathſome ſufferings, in regard to us, altogether vain and fruitleſs, yea indeed hurtful and pernicious; for if the croſs do not ſave us from our ſins, it will ſorely aggravate their guilt, and augment their puniſhment, bringing a ſeverer condemnation and a ſadder ruin on us.

ἀνασταυροῦν. Heb. vi. 6.

Heb. x. 29.

8. It may alſo yield great conſolation and joy to us, to contemplate our Lord upon the croſs, expreſſing his immenſe goodneſs and charity toward us; tranſacting our redemption; expiating our ſins, and ſuſtaining our miſeries; combating and defeating all the adverſaries of our ſalvation.

Is it not comfortable and pleaſant to behold him there ſtanding erect, not only as a reſolute ſufferer, but as a glorious conqueror; where *having ſpoiled principalities and powers, he made a ſolemn ſhew, triumphing over them?* No conqueror loftily ſeated in his triumphal chariot did ever yield a ſpectacle ſo gallant or magnificent; no tree was ever adorned with trophies ſo pompous or precious. To the external view and carnal ſenſe of men, our Lord was then expoſed to ſcorn and ſhame; but to ſpiritual and true diſcerning, all his and our enemies did there hang up, as objects of contempt, quite overthrown and undone: There the Devil, ὁ ἰσχυρὸς, that *ſtrong* and ſturdy *one,* did hang, bound and fettered, diſarmed and ſpoiled, utterly baffled and confounded. There death itſelf hung gaſping, with its ſting plucked out, and all its terrors quelled; his

Col. ii. 15.

Matt. xii. 29.

Luke xi. 22.

Heb. ii. 14.

1 Cor. xv. 54.

2 Tim. i. 1

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death having prevented ours, and purchaſed immortality for us. There the world, with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its fondly admired excellencies, its bewitching pleaſures, did hang up, all diſparaged and defaced, as it appeared to St. Paul; *God forbid*, ſaid he, *that I ſhould glory, ſave in the croſs of Chriſt, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* There *our ſins*, thoſe ſins which, as St. Peter ſaith, our Saviour *did carry up unto the gibbet*, did hang, as marks of his victorious prowefs, as objects of our horror and hatred, as malefactors by him *condemned in the fleſh.* There that manifold enmity (enmity between God and man, between one man and another, between man and his own ſelf, or conſcience) did hang, *aboliſhed in his fleſh*, and *ſlain upon the croſs; by the blood whereof he made peace, and reconciled all things in heaven and earth.* The blood of the croſs was the cement, joining the parts of the world. There, together with all our enemies, did hang all thoſe cauſes of woe and miſery to us, thoſe yokes of bondage, thoſe inſtruments of vexation, thoſe hard laws, which did ſo much burden and encumber men, did ſet them at ſuch diſtance and variance, did ſo far ſubject them to guilt and condemnation; all *that bond of ordinances*, inducing our obligation to ſo grievous forfeitures and penalties, was *nailed to the croſs*, being cancelled and expunged by our Saviour's performances there.

Ἀνήνεγκεν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

Rom. viii. 9.

Col. i. 10.

Eph. ii. 15, 16.

Col. ii. 14.

9. This conſideration is a ſtrong inducement to the practice of charity toward our neighbour: for can we forbear to love thoſe, toward whom our Lord bore ſuch tender affection, for whom he did ſuſtain ſo woful tortures and indignities? Shall we not in obedience to his moſt urgent commands, in conformity to his moſt notable example, in grateful return to him for his benefits, who thus did ſuffer for us, diſcharge this moſt ſweet and eaſy duty toward his beloved friends? Shall we not comport with an infirmity, or bear a petty neglect, or forgive a ſmall injury to our brother, whenas our Lord did bear a croſs for us, and from us, obtaining pardon for our numberleſs moſt heinous affronts and offences againſt God? It is St.

Paul's reaſoning; *We that are ſtrong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak—for even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.* Can we hear our Lord ſay, *This is my command, That ye love one another, as I have loved you;* and, *Hereby ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if ye love one another:* can we hear St. Paul exhorting, *Walk in love, as Chriſt alſo hath loved us, and hath given himſelf for us, an offering and a ſacrifice to God for a ſweetſmelling ſavour:* can we conſider St. John's arguing, *Beloved, if God ſo loved us, then ought we alſo to love one another: Hereby we perceive the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us: wherefore we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren?* can, I ſay, we conſider ſuch diſcourſes, without being diſpoſed to comply with them for the ſake of our crucified Saviour; all whoſe life and death were nothing elſe but one continual recommendation and enforcement of this duty?

Rom. xv. 3. John xv. 12. xiii. 8 Eph. v. 2 1 John iv 11. iii. 16 1 Pet. iv.

10. Farthermore, What can be more operative than this conſideration toward breeding a diſregard of this world, with all its deceitful vanities and miſchievous delights; toward reconciling our minds to the worſt condition it can bring us into; toward ſupporting our hearts under the heavieſt preſſures of affliction it can lay upon us? How can we refuſe, in ſubmiſſion to God's pleaſure, to bear contentedly a ſlight grievance, when he, as he gladly did, bore a croſs, infinitely more grievous to carnal will and ſenſe than any that can befall us? Can we expect, can we affect, can we deſire great proſperity, whenas the Son of God, our Lord and Maſter, did only taſte ſuch adverſity? Who can admire thoſe ſplendid trifles which our Lord did never regard in his life, which at his death did only ſerve to mock and abuſe him? Who can reliſh thoſe ſordid pleaſures, of which he living did not vouchſafe to taſte, and the contraries whereof he dying choſe to feel in all extremity? Who will dare to vilify, to diſdain, to reject a ſtate of ſorrow or diſgrace, which he by a voluntary ſuſception of it hath ſo dignified and graced; by which we reſemble and become conformable

Rom. viii 17.

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to him; by which we concur and partake with him; yea, by which we may promote, and in a sort complete, his designs; *filling up*, as St. Paul speaketh, *that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh?* Who now can much prefer being esteemed, applauded, approved or favoured by men, before infamy, reproach, derision, or persecution from them, especially when these do follow conscientious adherence to righteousness? Who can be very ambitious of worldly honour or repute, covetous of wealth, or greedy of pleasure, who observeth the only Son of God choosing rather to hang upon a cross than to sit upon a throne; inviting the clamours of spite and scorn, rather than acclamations of blessing and praise; divesting himself of all secular pomp, plenty, conveniences and solaces; embracing the garb of a slave and the repute of a malefactor, before the dignity and respect of a prince, which were his due, and which he easily could have obtained? Can we imagine it a very happy thing to be high and prosperous in this world, to swim here in affluence and pleasure; can we take it for a misery to be mean and low, to conflict with any wants or straits here, seeing the fountain of all happiness did himself condescend to so forlorn a state, and was pleased to become so deep a sufferer? If with the eyes of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked upon a gibbet, besmeared with his own blood, groaning under extreme anguish of pain, encompassed with all sorts of disgraceful abuses, *yielding*, as the Prophet foretold of him, *his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, hiding not his face from shame and spitting;* will not the imagination of such a sight dim the lustre of all earthly grandeurs and beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and satisfactions, quash all the glee which we can find in any wild frolics or riotous merriments?

Phil. iii. 10. Rev. i. 9. 1 Pet. iv. 14. Col. i. 24. Ἀναπληρῶν τὰ ὑστερήματα.

Cogitemus crucem ejus, et divitias totum putabimus. *Hier. Ep.* ii. *ad Nepot.*

Quis beatam vitam esse arbitretur in his, quæ contemnenda esse docuit filius Dei? *Aug. de Ag. Ch.* c. 11.

Isa. l. 6.

11. It is surely a great commendation of afflictions, and a strong consolation under them, to ponder well this point; for if hardship was to our Lord a school of duty, he, as the Apostle saith, *learning obedience from what he suffered;* if it was to him an instrument of perfection, as

Ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν. Heb. v. 8.

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the ſame Apoſtle implieth, when he ſaith, that *it became God to perfect the Captain of our ſalvation by ſuffering*; if it was a means of procuring the divine favour even to him, as thoſe words import, *Therefore the Father loveth me, becauſe I lay down my life*; if it was to him a ſtep unto glory, according to that ſaying, *Was not Chriſt to ſuffer, and ſo to enter into his glory?* yea, if it was a ground of conferring on him that ſublimeſt pitch of dignity above all creatures, as we are taught; for *becauſe*, ſaith St. Paul, *he was obedient to death, even the death of the croſs, therefore did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name*; and, *We ſee Jeſus*, ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrews, *for the ſuffering of death crowned with glory and honour*; and, *Worthy*, crieth out the heavenly ſociety in the Revelations, *is the Lamb that was ſlain*, and *who redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing*; if affliction did miniſter ſuch advantages to him; and if by our conformity to him in undergoing it with like ſubmiſſion, humility, and patience, it may afford the like to us, what reaſon can there be, that we ſhould anywiſe be diſcompoſed, diſcouraged, or diſconſolate under it? Much more reaſon ſurely there is, that with St. Paul and all the holy Apoſtles we ſhould boaſt, rejoice, and exult in our tribulations; far more cauſe we have with them to eſteem it a favour, a privilege, and an ornament to us, than to be diſcontented or diſpleaſed therewith. To do thus is a duty incumbent on us as Chriſtians; for *he*, ſaith our Maſter, *that doth not take up his croſs, and follow me, is not worthy of me: He that doth not carry his croſs, and go after me, cannot be my diſciple:* he that doth not willingly take the croſs, when it is preſented to him by God's hand; he that doth not contentedly bear it, when it is by Providence impoſed on him, is nowiſe worthy of the honour to wait on Chriſt; he is not capable to be reckoned among the diſciples of our heavenly Maſter; he is not worthy of Chriſt, as not having the courage, the conſtancy, the ſincerity required of a Chriſtian; of one pretending to ſuch great benefits,

Heb. ii. 10.
John x. 17.
Luke xxiv. 26.
Phil. ii. 9.
Heb. ii. 9.
Rev. v. 12. (9.)
Rom. v. 3.
Col. i. 24.
Matt. v. 12.
Luke vi. 23.
Phil. i. 29.
Acts v. 41.
Jam. i. 2.
Heb. x. 34.
1 Pet. i. 7.
Heb. xii.—
1 Cor. i. 4.
Luke xiv. 27. ix. 23.
Matt x. 38. xvi. 24.

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such high privileges, such excellent rewards, as Christ our Lord and Saviour doth propose; he cannot be Christ's disciple, shewing such incapacity to learn those needful lessons of humility and patience dictated by him; declaring such an indisposition to transcribe those copies of submission to divine will, self-denial and self-resignation, so fairly set him by the instruction and example of Christ: *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind;* and, *Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps,* saith St. Peter.

Matt. xi 29. ὑπογραμμὸν ὑπολιμπάνων.
1 Pet. ii. 21.
1 Pet. iv. 1.
1 Pet. ii. 21.

12. The willing susception and the cheerful sustenance of the cross is indeed the express condition, and the proper character of our Christianity; in signification whereof it hath been from immemorial time a constant usage to mark those who enter into it with the figure of the cross. The cross, as the instrument by which our peace with God was wrought, as the stage whereon our Lord did act the last part of his miraculous obedience, consummating our redemption; as the field wherein the *Captain of our salvation* did achieve his noble victory, and erect his glorious trophies over all the enemies thereof, was well assumed to be the badge of our profession, the ensign of our spiritual warfare, the pledge of our constant adherence to our crucified Saviour; in relation to whom our chief hope is grounded, our great joy and sole glory doth consist; for, *God forbid,* saith St. Paul, *that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ.*

Naz. Or. 36. ad fin.
Τὸ τρόπαιον τοῦ σταυροῦ. Apost. Const. viii. 12.
Ἐμοὶ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι. Gal. vi. 14.

Let it be *to the Jews a scandal,* or offensive to their fancy, prepossessed with expectations of a Messias flourishing in secular pomp and prosperity; let it be *folly to the Greeks,* or seem absurd to men imbued (puffed up, corrupted) with fleshly notions and maxims of worldly craft, disposing men to value nothing which is not grateful to present sense or fancy; that God should put his own most beloved Son into so very sad and despicable a condition; that salvation from death and misery should be procured by so miserable a death; that eternal joy, glory, and happiness should issue from these fountains of extreme sorrow

1 Cor. i. 23.
Orig. in Cels. lib. ii. p. 79.

and shame; that a person in external semblance devoted to so opprobrious and slavish usage should be the Lord and Redeemer of mankind, the King and Judge of all the world; let this doctrine, I say, be scandalous and distasteful to some persons tainted with prejudice; let it appear strange and incredible to others blinded with self-conceit; let all the proud, all the profane, all the inconsiderate part of mankind slight and reject it; yet to us it must appear grateful and joyous; to us it is πιστὸς λόγος, *a faithful* (and credible) *proposition, worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world thus to save sinners:* to us, who discern by a clearer light, and are endued with a purer sense, kindled by the divine Spirit, from whence, with comfortable satisfaction of mind, we may apprehend and taste that God could not in a higher measure, or a fitter manner, illustrate his glorious attributes of goodness and justice, his infinite grace and mercy toward his poor creatures, his holy displeasure against wickedness, his impartial severity in punishing iniquity and impiety, or in vindicating his own honour and authority, than by thus ordering his Son to suffer for us; that also true virtue and goodness could not otherwise be taught, be exemplified, be commended and impressed with greater advantage.

1 Tim. i. 15. 2 Tim. ii. 11.

Grot. de Ver. iv. 12.

We might allege the suffrages of eminent philosophers, persons esteemed most wise by improvement of natural light, who have declared, that perfection of virtue can hardly be produced or expressed otherwise than by undergoing most sharp afflictions and tortures [a]; and that God therefore, as a wise Father, is wont with them to exercise those whom he best loveth: we might also produce instances of divers persons, even among Pagans [b], most famous and honourable in the judgment of all posterity for their singular virtue and wisdom, who were tried in this

[a] Plat. de Rep. ii. p. 594.

Magnum exemplum, nisi mala fortuna non invenit. *Sen. de Prov.* iii. Plut. de Stoic. contr. p. 1931.

[b] Socrates, Phocion, Thraseas, Aristides, &c. Vid. Ælian. Var. xi. 9. 2. 43.

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furnace, and thereby ſhone moſt brightly; their ſuffering, by the iniquity and ingratitude, by the envy and malignity of their times, in their reputation, liberty, and life; their undergoing foul ſlanders, infamous puniſhments, and ignominious deaths, more than any other practices of their life, recommending them to the regard and admiration of future ages[c]; although none of them, as our Lord, did ſuffer of choice, or upon deſign to advance the intereſts of goodneſs, but upon conſtraint, and irreſiſtible force put on them; none of them did ſuffer in a manner ſo ſignal, with circumſtances ſo rare, and with events ſo wonderful; yet ſuffering as they did was their chief glory; whence it ſeemeth, that even according to the ſincereſt dictates of common wiſdom this diſpenſation was not ſo unaccountable; nor ought the Greeks, in conſiſtency with themſelves, and in reſpect to their own admired philoſophy, to have *deemed our doctrine* of the croſs *fooliſh*, or unreaſonable.

To conclude; ſince thereby a charity and humanity ſo unparalleled, (far tranſcending theirs who have been celebrated for devoting their lives out of love to their country, or kindneſs to their friends,) a meekneſs ſo incomparable, a reſolution ſo invincible, a patience ſo heroical, were manifeſted for the inſtruction and direction of men; ſince never were the vices and the vanities of the world (ſo prejudicial to the welfare of mankind) ſo remarkably diſparaged; ſince never any ſuffering could pretend to ſo worthy and beneficial effects, the expiation of the whole world's ſin, and reconciliation of mankind to God, ſuch as no performance beſide, nor any other ſacrifice did ever aim to procure; ſince, in fine, no virtue had ever ſo glorious rewards, as ſovereign dignity to him that exerciſed it, and eternal happineſs to thoſe who imitate it; ſince, I ſay, there be ſuch excellent uſes and fruits of the croſs borne by our Bleſſed Saviour, we can have no reaſon to be

[c] Cicuta Socratem magnum fecit, &c. *Sen. Ep.* 13, et 67, et 104. (Sen. Ep. 81. Ep. 113.)

Rutilii innocentia ac virtus lateret, niſi accepiſſet injuriam; dum violatur effulſit. *Sen. Ep.* 79.

ded at it, or aſhamed of it; but with all reaſon ily we ſhould approve and humbly adore, as well the wiſdom of God, as all other his glorious attributes, rioufly diſplayed therein: to whom therefore, as is due, let us devoutly render all thanks, all praiſe, and

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nd, Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our in his blood, and hath made us kings and prieſts unto and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever ever.

Rev. i. 5, 6.

leſſing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever ever. Amen.

Rev. v. 13.

THE END OF THE FIFTH VOLUME.

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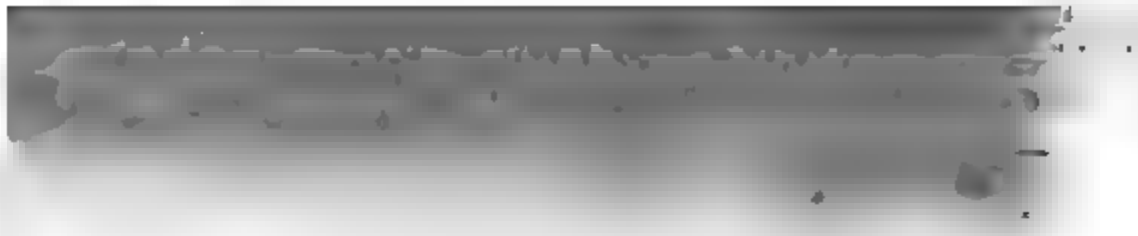

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